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# MAHOMETANISM.

AN ARTICLE REPRINTED FROM  
"THE CHRISTIAN REMEMBRANCER OF JANUARY, 1855."

BY THE  
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1856.





TO THE HONOURABLE  
GEORGE FREDERICK BOYLE,  
FOUNDER OF THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH AND  
COLLEGE, ISLE OF CUMBRAE,  
THESE PAGES,  
WRITTEN WITHIN THE WALLS REARED BY HIS  
MUNIFICENCE,  
ARE,  
WITH ATTACHMENT AND GRATITUDE,  
INSCRIBED.





## PREFACE.

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THE hackneyed apology for such reprints as the present, namely, the suggestion of friends, is at least in this instance a true one. How far it is valid and sufficient, must be left to others to decide.

The alterations are limited to a few corrections, and some very slight additions. The allusions to the war, which may have lent a fictitious interest to this article, have been suffered to remain; and the reader is therefore requested to bear in mind that it was written towards the close of the year 1854.

To say that subsequent study has confirmed the author in his views, but too frequently means, that he has caught at everything tending in the same direction, and either wilfully or unconsciously overlooked all that might impugn the correctness of his conclusions. He may, however, venture to refer to the second volume of Dean Milman's *History of Latin Christianity* (which, although slightly prior in date of publication, had not been seen by him when he wrote) as containing much that coincides with the opinions here expressed. He has also met with a few sentences in Dr. Mill's work against Strauss, which lend support to the estimate here given of Mahometanism as a system; a support

the more valuable, from the circumstance that that lamented writer has on this subject not only the claim upon our attention arising from his deep piety and learning, but also that conferred by his experience of the practical working of Islamism, as displayed in India.

It will doubtless be thought by many, that what is said or quoted concerning the Turks is too harsh as regards their past, too despairing with reference to their future. This is, of course, quite possible; still the writer would again request any who wish to form a just judgment, to read with caution all publications upon Turkey and her people which have issued from the press during the last two or three years. It is natural to wish well to our allies, but such wishes are not always conducive to impartiality of temper or clearness of perception. Those who indulge in hopeful prospects for Turkey appear to argue mainly from the wonderful courage and endurance displayed at Silistria and at Kars, and from the representations put forth in the two volumes of M. Ubicini. Without detracting from the merits of the Turks in war, let it be remembered that they were led in both these sieges by English officers; and that the same records which describe the gallant fidelity of the Turkish soldiers, corroborate all previous accounts of the hopeless corruption of their native Pashas. And as regards M. Ubicini, we may give credit to his statistics without necessarily supposing that his statement of the case is complete, or his inferences always tenable. A detailed examination of his arguments would be unsuitable in an essay which only treats of Turkey incidentally; but those who distrust the soundness of M. Ubicini's theories may find

additional cause for that distrust in the writings of M. Koch, Lord Carlisle, and Mr. Finlay.

And, finally, the author cannot allow the re-statement of a reference to the one great fault of our late foes, without expressing his full recognition of the many admirable points in the Russian character.

July, 1856.

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NOTE.—It may be well to refresh the reader's memory on the signification of the following words :—

MOHAMMED, the glorified.

ISLAM, entire resignation to the will of God.

IMAN, faith.

MOSLEM, MUSSULMAN, believer (derived from Islam).

CORAN, or KORAN, recitation, reading.

ALCORAN, (the same, with the article) *the* reading *par excellence*.

OTTOMANS, the Turks of the race of Othman, as distinguished from the

SELJUKIANS, the Turks of the race of Seljuk.

MUFTI, the chief priest among Mussulmans.

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If any profits arise from the sale of this publication, they will be given to the fund for erecting the proposed Memorial Church at Constantinople.



## MAHOMETANISM.\*

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IF, gazing upon the shelves of a well-stocked modern library, we should observe a large and increasing proportion of volumes, which, more or less directly, bore reference to the person and the creed of Mahomet; and if, further, we were informed that their general tendency was more favourable to the Arabian teacher than were, for

- \* ART. III.—1. *Ueber das Verhältniss des Islams zum Evangelium.* Von. DR. J. A. MÖHLER. Ed. DÖLLINGER. Regensburg. 1839.
2. *Essai sur l'Histoire des Arabes avant l'Islamisme, pendant l'Epoque de Mahomet, et jusqu'à la réduction de toutes les tribus sous la loi Musulmane.* Par. A. P. CAUSSIN DE PERCEVAL, Professeur d'Arabe au Collège de France, &c. Tomes 3. Paris: Didot Frères. 1847-48.
3. *Mahomet et les Origines, de l'Islamisme.* Par M. ERNEST RENAN. *Revue des deux Mondes.* Paris, 1851. Tome xii. p. 1063.
4. *Lettres sur la Turquie, ou Tableau Statistique de l'Empire Ottoman.* Par. M. A. UBICINI. Première Partie. Les Ottomans. Deuxième Edition. Paris. 1853.
5. *Lives of Mahomet and his Successors.* By WASHINGTON IRVING. New York and London. 1850.
6. *History of Arabia and its People.* By ANDREW CHRICHTON, LL.D. New Edition. London and Edinburgh: Nelson and Sons.
7. *Lectures on the History of the Turks in its Relation to Christianity.* By the Author of Loss and Gain. Dublin. 1854.



the most part, those of an earlier age, the first and most obvious mode of accounting for this circumstance would be the existence of the War in the East. Nor indeed would it be difficult to point out many volumes, for whose tone and for whose very appearance our new armed alliance would sufficiently account. But this solution would before long find its limit. After glancing at the contents of numberless books of travel, and of biographical and historical sketches, professing to throw light upon the all-absorbing topic of the day, we should arrive by a retrograde course at rows of volumes upon the same theme, prior in point of time to the outbreak, or even the expectation, of the present war, yet often partaking of the same lenient tone in all that respects Mahomet and Mahometanism.<sup>1</sup> It was long before the Anglo-French support of Turkey that Mr. Carlyle exclaimed, that Mahomet's creed 'was a kind of 'Christianity—I should say a better kind than 'that of those miserable Syrian sects, with their 'vain janglings about'<sup>2</sup>—we rather shrink from

<sup>1</sup> Lest any purist should be shocked in *limine* at our employment of the popular corruption, *Mahomet*, we beg to observe with M. Caussin (for the remark applies to Englishmen quite as well as Frenchmen)—'*cette altération du mot Mohammed est consacrée parmi nous.*' The same might be asserted of the term *Mahometanism*, as applied to his creed. The reader who dislikes either form may mentally substitute another. In the latter case, there is abundant choice. He may adopt the German word *Islam*, or the French *Islamisme*; may, with Mr. Hallam and others, speak of *Mohammedism*; with Dean Prideaux and others, of *Mahometism*. The last two coinages are, we presume, as lawful as that of Irvingism and the like names.

<sup>2</sup> Heroes and Hero-Worship, Lect. ii. p. 98. We trust that neither Mr. Monckton Milnes, nor Mr. Kingsley, in endorsing this lecture with the mark of their approbation, intended to

finishing the sentence, since the words are those of the Nicene Creed and the Arian heresy respectively, concerning the nature of Him who is the object of Christian worship. It was in the days of European peace, that Sir Charles Fellowes, ignoring, if we mistake not, all reminiscences of the Seven Churches in Asia Minor, produced the account of his travels, as a panegyrist of the Mahometan conqueror, Mahmood, and his people. The ponderous tomes of Mahomet's latest German biographer, Weil,<sup>1</sup> were published some three or four years since. Of the works given at the head of this article, one only (that of Dr. Newman) can, we believe, be said to have been originally prompted by the stirring events occurring round us.

We must seek, then, some more adequate solution. The causes of these phenomena are probably manifold and varied: enough for us to indicate a few.

The mere appearance of fresh works upon Islamism and its founder may have originated, partly in the love of book-making, partly from the discoveries made by honest, student-like research. The book-making tribe is ever on the look out for a hero who is not worn threadbare, a theme which is not yet exhausted; and certain of its members seem to have become aware (even

include this sentence. There are, as will be seen, some positions in the lecture of Mr. Carlyle which we are very far from controverting. On the other hand, there are some which Mr. C. all but controverts himself, and half unsays where he is speaking of *the hero as poet*. Pp. 175, 176.

<sup>1</sup> *Mohammed der Prophet, sein Leben und seine Lehre*. Stuttgart, 1843.

before the powerful impulse since imparted to their labours) that such a theme and such a hero were yet to be found in the past history and present condition of Arabia and Asia Minor, Turkey and Hindostan. On the other hand, the truly learned Orientalist, the critical and philosophic investigator, has alighted upon manuscripts hitherto undeciphered in the West, or detected what appear to him mistakes in the ordinary estimate of Mahometanism by Europeans; and out of the fulness of his knowledge and strength of his convictions, imparted to us, as became him, the fruits of his study and meditations.

Thus much for the mere existence of this class of books. The greater tenderness displayed towards Mahomet is a distinct and somewhat more complicate affair. We are not ignorant that in venturing to assert it as a fact, we are speaking with some degree of vagueness and generality. Among the studious writers of the present century may be found those who have dealt severely with the creed of Islam. Our travellers, too, have, in many instances, been unsparing in their criticisms upon Turkish character and manners. And so, again, among authors of an earlier generation there are partisans, as they may be fairly termed, of Mahomet. The most learned English translator of the Koran, Sale, is pronounced, even by Gibbon, no harsh judge, to be half a Mahometan; and a French biographer, the Comte de Boulainvilliers, seems to have composed his untrustworthy *Vie de Mahomet*, as an attack, and hardly a covert one, upon Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Boulainvilliers, who died A. D. 1722, is said to have ended his days as a Christian. He seems to have asserted that this,

Nevertheless, if the least favourable of our list of books be compared with the earlier comments of Prideaux,<sup>1</sup> Maracci,<sup>2</sup> White,<sup>3</sup> the compilers of the *Universal History*, or even of Professor Smyth,<sup>4</sup> it will be allowed, we think, that the balance is in Mahomet's favour. Such modification of views, be it greater or less, as has really taken place, will be probably found to have arisen from an admixture of causes, some most honourable and generous, some very treacherous and malignant. If, for instance, any deeper research into the original sources of history, or calmer meditation upon facts already known, has led to discoveries which lessen the burden of charges against Mahomet, what lover of truth will hesitate to accept such results with cheerfulness? If, again, the changed circumstances of the Ottoman Empire—once keeping all Europe at bay, now reduced to beg Christian support against her powerful antagonist of the North—throw a different

and other sceptical productions of his pen, were written in aid of religious truth, from a conviction that Divine Providence would raise up defenders of sound doctrine. (Art. Boulainvilliers, *Nouvelle Biographie Universelle*. Paris, 1853.) It would be equally easy to believe that the Czar intended the present war as a boon to Turkey, and under the conviction that powerful supporters of her cause would be vouchsafed to her.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Mahomet*, by Humphrey Prideaux, D.D., Dean of Norwich. London, A.D. 1708. (Fourth Edit.)

<sup>2</sup> Maracci, Professor of Arabic at Rome, published his Latin translation of the Koran, with the *Prodromus* and *Refutatio Alcorani*, at Padua, in A.D. 1698. It is said to have been the result of forty years' labour. (See Chrichton, p. 227.)

<sup>3</sup> Professor White's Bampton Lectures were preached at Oxford, A.D. 1784.

<sup>4</sup> *Lectures on Modern History*, vol. i. lect. iii.

hue over the aspect, not merely of her present condition, but even of her past history, who will deny but that such alteration in the mental vision of men, arises from a noble sentiment, which may occasionally need to be checked and moderated, but seldom or never to be repressed? We too often behold, on the part of men in power and authority, a reversal of that grand old Roman rule :—

*Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.*

Let us rejoice at any proofs that it still abides in the hearts of Englishmen, for it is one which used to be deeply enshrined in their better nature, and has frequently shone forth amidst the fermentation caused by great events. Let anyone, to take a modern example, look at the judgments passed by our countrymen upon Napoleon, at the time when he stood forth as the conqueror at Austerlitz or Wagram, and Napoleon as the exile of Saint Helena ; it will hardly seem that the same person is being spoken of. Moreover, in such cases, there is apt to be a reaction, inasmuch as it is probable that enmity and alarm have unduly exaggerated the faults of a foe. And thus, too, the somewhat excessive anti-Mahometan zeal of a Prideaux, a Maracci, and in later times a Frederick Schlegel, was of itself calculated to provoke a counter-demonstration of feeling from tolerably unbiassed by-standers.

And here we would gladly close our list of causes for the phenomena in question. We wish that we could think that such motives had in all cases been the leading ones. But there is that about some writings of the day which forbids us

so to think; suspicions of the existence of a very different element from those above-named will occasionally force themselves upon the mind, and it were no true charity to conceal them. We fear that, in some cases, the panegyrists of Islamism are, with more or less consciousness of purpose, again trying to employ it as a weapon against Christianity, or, at any rate, in support of the worst species of latitudinarianism. They fancy, and possibly not without reason, that infidelity has not yet availed itself to the utmost of the specious arguments deducible from the origin and progress of the Arabian religion; that it may yet be made to perplex the evidence for the divinity of the Christian faith just in the point where Christianity appeared most strong, namely, its extension and adaptation to the different races of mankind; and that thus, if Mahometanism can no longer hope to subdue Christendom by force of arms, it may yet become an intellectual cause of its decay and ultimate overthrow.

Vain hope! vain as ever the expectation of the Mussulman forces on the eve of their meeting with Charles Martel at Poitiers, or Don John of Austria at Lepanto, or Sobieski under the walls of Vienna! He who hath promised to His Church that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her, can, whensoever it pleases Him, raise up champions in the arena of discussion as bold, as true, as victorious as those who erst contended for His kingdom upon earth with sword and spear, and jeoparded their lives unto the death. Vain hope! yet not, therefore, to be contemned and disregarded by such as desire the glory of God and the highest welfare of their brethren. For even as

the power of the Crescent, though doomed to wane and fade before the Cross, has yet been proved a source of sore trial and perplexity, and caused torrents of human blood to flow, so, too, the reasoners on its behalf, though never fated to enjoy any real and lasting triumph, may yet win for a season some mental realm of Spain, some moral Constantinople, and help to injure, if not slay, the souls of many, as their prototypes maimed and destroyed their bodies. We seem to detect some traces of such mischief even in quarters where deliberate hostility to revelation was certainly not intended by the writer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following illustration of our meaning is one of the *least* offensive that we could select. A living biographer, speaking of the commencement of Mahomet's career, remarks: 'The *good old* Christian writers, on treating of the advent of one whom *they* denounce as the Arab enemy of the Church, make superstitious record of divers prodigies which occurred about this time, awful forerunners of the troubles about to agitate the world. In Constantinople, at that time the seat of Christian empire, were several monstrous births and prodigious apparitions, which struck dismay into the hearts of all beholders.' [The italics are ours.] Some details are given; as moving crosses, hideous figures rising from the Nile; the sun diminished in appearance, and shedding pale and baleful rays; furnace-light on a moonless night, and bloody lances glittering in the sky. Now we do not pretend to have examined the evidence for the appearance of these prodigies, and are quite ready to admit that very possibly it might not bear a searching examination. But, for his own sake, and for the sake of others whom he may influence, a Christian writer should be careful how he indulges in anything like sneers at assertions so closely resembling the promises made by our Lord with reference to events of which Mahomet's coming may be fairly considered partly typical. (S. Matt. xxiv. 11, 21—24, 29.) As for the words, 'whom *they* denounce,' &c., they are almost ridiculous. Mahomet's hostility to the Church (whatever be thought of his degree of consciousness or guilt in the matter) is a *simple historic fact*, quite independent of any one's denunciation, or any one's denial.

These considerations are, of course, open to controversy. As, however, we cannot afford to dwell upon them, for the present, at any greater length, they must be left to the judgment of the reader ; but, whatever be the reason, it is at least plain matter of fact, that the theme of Mahometanism has received much illustration since the time of Gibbon. Those who, like that distinguished historian, must 'profess their total ignorance of the Oriental tongues,' may not only enjoy the advantage of referring to the works which he consulted, and to the graphic pages of his own narrative, but may likewise have recourse to many valuable and important publications which add greatly to our stock of knowledge upon the subject. The field of inquiry has been surveyed from points of view the most remote, and even opposite, and there now exists an ample collection of essays and treatises, biographies and histories, in which Mahometanism is successively portrayed as it appeared to spectators who have gazed upon it with the glance of a philosopher, a sceptic, a latitudinarian, an ultra-Protestant, or a Roman Catholic divine.

*Et nos ergo manum* ; we, too, have looked, in our humble way, at questions so intimately connected with some of the deepest problems which can occupy the human mind, some of the most weighty events which can affect the fortunes of the human race. We, too, have attempted to weigh in the balance the lucubrations of some authors of learning and of genius ; and to form opinions upon Mahomet, and the antecedents of his country before his birth, upon the nature of his creed and its relation to Paganism and to Christianity.



Crude and undigested as our notions may probably prove, they may yet be not ill-founded in the main; they may present from the works of the distinguished authors before us some aspects of the case which will be new to a portion of our readers, and suggest to the happy few, who can extract gold as it were from sand, far more perhaps than was thought of by the writer. But before commencing our self-imposed task, it will naturally be expected that we render some account of our authorities. This reasonable expectation we proceed at once (briefly, but not, we trust, presumptuously) to gratify.

The essay of Möhler, so well-known as the author of the 'Symbolik,' was originally published in a review. Since his death it has been reprinted, in company with other minor writings of its author, by Dr. Döllinger, and it may be easily procured in this form at a very reasonable price. It is now some years since our Quarterly Reviewers called attention to its merits, and expressed a desire that it should be translated. The hint has not been lost: in the catalogue of books recommended to their students by the authorities at S. Augustine's College, Canterbury, appears a translation of this essay by an English Clergyman, the Rev. J. P. Menge, of the Church Mission, Guruckpore. This version, however, we have not had an opportunity of procuring.<sup>1</sup>

It is indeed a dignified and masterly paper, full of information, still fuller of thought. Truly Catholic in its tone, it would have delighted the

<sup>1</sup> Shortly after the publication of this article, the kindness of some unknown friend, which is hereby gratefully acknowledged, sent us a copy of this excellent translation.

honoured founder of those annual London lectures,<sup>1</sup> which are directed to be launched 'against notorious unbelievers, not descending lower to any controversies that are among Christians themselves.' In accordance with his title, Möhler has taken into consideration, 1. the external, 2. the internal, 'Relation of Islamism to the Gospel;' adding thereto a third part, upon the probable future of Mahometanism. Admirable as is the discussion of the main problems considered in the treatise, this third part we must, we fear, be pronounced to be somewhat unduly sanguine in its expectations.

The interest which Möhler felt in these questions was aroused, if not created, by the events of 1829. And here, *en passant*, we would beg the thoughtful student, who would fain estimate at its just worth the excessive eulogy at present lavished on the Turks, to cast his eye backward for one instant on the history of the formation of the Greek kingdom. Let him compare, if possible, the language of the English press, or at least of a large portion of it, at that epoch, with the tone adopted by it now. If those fervid denunciations of Turkish cruelty and oppression are, for the moment, forgotten or explained away, it is no hazardous prophecy to foretel that a day will surely come when these far less merited praises will be likewise buried in oblivion, or if remembered, remembered only with regret.

The second work upon our list, which sets forth the results of the researches of M. Caussin de Perceval, Professor of Arabic, at Paris, is beyond

<sup>1</sup>The Boyle Lectures, founded by the Hon. Robert Boyle, A. D. 1691.

doubt one of the most important contributions to a right understanding of the historic part of the question which has for some years issued from the press. M. Caussin has made diligent and judicious use of some hitherto unexplored manuscripts preserved in the noble library of the French capital; more especially of one by the Arabian author, Ibn Khaldoun. The arrangement of his materials is good; his style admirably transparent; and if, at times, the scantiness of information reduces his narrative to little more than a bare catalogue of names, the consequent aridity must in fairness be ascribed to a conscientious desire of imparting to us the whole of the discoveries he has made. Even those portions which are most in danger of appearing tedious, are frequently relieved by the point of some Arab proverb, or the sparkle of their native poetry. The critical parts of the work display much judgment and good sense; whatever can be won from the field of Holy Writ is gleaned with care and reverence. In his endeavours to extract some grains of truth from ancient Arabian legends, M. Caussin seems to us to follow in the wake of Niebuhr. His subject, however, gives him one advantage over the historian of Rome. Niebuhr had to deal with stories which most of us had been brought up from childhood to believe implicitly. His scepticism was a great shock to all the classically educated. Wordsworth expressed the general sentiment:—

‘Those old credulities, to nature dear,  
Shall they no longer bloom upon the stock  
Of history, stript naked as a rock  
’Mid a dry desert? What is it we hear!  
The glory of infant Rome must disappear,  
Her morning splendours vanish, and their place  
Know them no more.’

But, in the case of Arab legends, there is no such early partiality and implicit credence to be encountered : in many instances the tale investigated will prove new to the great majority of readers ; and even those which may be previously known, are generally such as we are glad to find capable of yielding so much as a hint of truth and fact to the inquirer. And here again, M. Caussin reminds us of one of the best features of Niebuhr's great work, inasmuch as he might fairly adopt that historian's words, and say that he has written 'on the principle of asserting nothing, however slight, with any other than the precise shade of conviction which it has in his own mind.'<sup>1</sup>

The paper of M. Renan in the *Revue des deux Mondes* is not unworthy of that most ably conducted periodical. We are not sure that we can thoroughly, and in all respects, approve its somewhat rationalistic tone ; but it certainly seems to display a large amount of industry and acuteness. M. Renan has earned the right of criticising Orientalists, from having long made such subjects his especial study.

Two of the qualities which we have praised in M. Caussin, good arrangement and clearness of expression, may be almost said to be national excellences of French authors. They are again exhibited, though in a different way, in M. Ubicini's 'Letters upon Turkey.' This seems to be recognised by good authorities as being at present *the* book upon all that relates to the statistics of that country.

The 'History of Arabia' by Dr. Chrichton,

<sup>1</sup> Niebuhr, *Hist. of Rome*, vol. ii. p. 286. (Eng. Tr.)

although not to be classed for originality or importance with the writings of Möhler, Caussin, or Ubicini, yet contains much compressed information, and deserves praise for the evident care and candour with which it is composed. These qualities induce us to select it from among the many similar productions of the day.

We cannot give Mr. Washington Irving's book a very high place among the efforts of his pen. The story is (with some slight exceptions) written in a good spirit, and pleasantly told; but we agree with M. Renan in thinking that there is no great exhibition of critical power on the part of the biographer.

It remains to say a few words upon the Lectures, by the author of 'Loss and Gain.' That the lecturer should thus designate himself would naturally lead the reader to expect a controversial treatment of the subject, and such a treatment he will indeed discover throughout a considerable portion of the work. One leading idea, perhaps *the* leading idea, intended to be impressed upon the minds of the hearers, was the energy, perseverance, and virtual success of the Roman See in resisting the progress of the Crescent. To an audience of co-religionists, the task of proving this point must have been as easy as it was grateful. Nor, we imagine, will the candid Protestant of any school, who is well versed in history, deny to the Popes of Rome the just praise of their far-sightedness and noble zeal in such a cause; nor complain that a Roman Catholic writer should remind us on this head of much that we might be disposed to forget. It may be true, that if the voice of the Church of the fourteenth and fifteenth

centuries had been listened to by warriors and statesmen, 'there would have been no Turks in Europe for the Russians to turn out of it.' It is lamentable to reflect that the internal wars and jealousies of Christian states prevented such an effort to resist their entry being made. But the entire case seems to us, we must own, to be presented by Dr. Newman in a partisan-like way, which makes the ordinary reader who is not of the same communion somewhat suspicious and distrustful of his guide. Thus, for instance, it *looks* as if the historical sketch came to an end with the battle of Lepanto, in A. D. 1571, rather than with the victory of John Sobieski nearly a century later, because a Pope was more immediately concerned with the naval triumph than that gained by the Polish king before Vienna. Of the Popes who reigned just before the Reformation, he speaks as follows:—'As to the Pontiffs who filled the Holy See during that period, I will say no more than this, that it did not please the good Providence of God to raise up for His Church such heroic men as S. Leo of the fifth, and S. Gregory of the eleventh century.' Now, this is language which may possibly be excused, we suppose, in a zealous Roman Catholic, who shrinks from proclaiming the sins of a Pope, as any of us, in private life, might naturally hold back from publishing the errors of a parent. For ourselves, we should consider the employment of such terms a step towards depravation of the moral sense, towards obliterating the broad distinction between right and wrong, virtue and iniquity. Would not total silence have been preferable to such extraordinary euphemisms? An

Alexander VI. and a Leo X. not quite fit for the calendar, something short of being saints! And, further, though we have no desire to extenuate the faults of rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, in Constantinople and the regions round about before its fall in the middle of the fifteenth century, yet the student of history who shall peruse these Lectures will do well to bear in mind, that there is a Greek, as well as a Latin, account of the transactions of that memorable era; and that the two should be diligently compared by him who would form a correct judgment upon the entire case. A single instance may suffice for illustration.

Among the kingdoms which were attacked by the conquering Ottomans at the period of which we speak, was that of Bosnia. Its rude mountains, and the strong castles which crowned their summits, fitted the country to become a very rampart of Western Christendom. The Bosnians, however, were accused, and we fear not unjustly, of being tainted with Manichean heresy. Being a somewhat ignorant and barbarous race, they do not seem to have possessed very distinct and settled convictions; and, under a sense of alarm at the impending danger, they sought to form alliance with the Christians of the West. Their king, Stephen Thomas, in A.D. 1445, actually conformed to the Church of Rome. But as he declined to punish those among his subjects who retained their opinions, the Latins remained doubtful of his orthodoxy, and regarded the misfortunes which fell upon his country as a direct chastisement from Heaven. In the year 1462 (*i.e.* nine years after Constantinople had fallen), Stephen, son and successor of this Stephen

Thomas, addressed Pope Pius II. upon the same subject. The Turks had been treating the Bosnian peasants with such favour as to win a majority to their side; unless the Venetians, the Pope, or some of the Latin people lent assistance, the country would pass, without a blow, to the foes of Christendom. Bosnia would in that case prove a safe harbour to the Turks, whence they might, in their turn, oppress Italy or Germany. At present, a few good troops would be enough to restore courage, and induce all the warlike Bosnians to imperil their lives for the defence of their country, and remove the scourge of the barbarians from Christendom. But if Bosnia were suffered to fall, the most powerful armies would hardly avail to keep the Turks out of Italy and Germany. In conclusion, Stephen reminded the Pope that his father had announced to Nicholas V. the coming capture of Constantinople early enough for a few thousand Latin soldiers to have saved it—the letter, remarks the historian, still exists, and is full of just and generous sentiments—and entreated Pius II. not to permit the Latins to fall a second time into the same mistake.

Pope Pius II. refused the wished-for aid; Bosnia fell; the predictions of King Stephen proved but too correct. Our authority for this narrative is Sismondi, in his *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*; <sup>1</sup> and if that great historian be as extreme in one direction as any Papal writer can be in the opposite; if his reflections are but too frequently prompted (as one of his compatriots once remarked to us) *par la haine des rois, et la*

<sup>1</sup> Chap. lxxix.



*haine des prêtres*; yet his honesty has throughout prevented him from anything like misstatement of facts. Moreover, we are writing with the Italian translation, by Signor L. Toccagni, before us, published but a few years since at Milan.<sup>1</sup> In this version the editors have added notes to such portions of Sismondi's work as appeared unfair to the Roman Church; but the portion referred to in the present instance has no such note. Whatever inferences may be fairly drawn from it (and the narrative tells against the Bosnians as well as the Italians), we leave to the judgment of our readers, simply observing that the very existence of such facts is but barely alluded to in Dr. Newman's Lectures.<sup>2</sup>

But having freely pointed out what we consider blemishes in this volume, we may be permitted to speak with equal freedom of its manifold beauties and attractions. Although bearing some slight marks of haste, and of being got up for the occasion, although at times almost *over-charged* with facts, this little production will impart to most readers a far clearer and more connected view of Turkish history than can be derived from many books of far greater pretensions. Despite its partisanship (nay, perhaps in consequence of it, for it is open and avowed) it may be safely read, we should imagine, by any one. And in its skilful use of very varied and diverse materials, in its

<sup>1</sup> Milano, Borroni e Scotti, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> The advice and exhortations of Pope Pius II. to the heroic Scanderbeg (A. D. 1463) to break a solemn treaty which had been most rigidly observed by the Turkish Sultan, were as imprudent as they were morally indefensible. Scanderbeg had great scruples, but at length, to his cost, gave way.—*Sismondi*, chap. lxxix.

harmonious reconciliation of apparently conflicting statements, in its fine discrimination, in the magic of its style,—now pausing in philosophic thoughtfulness, now hurrying onward with a vigorous flow of narrative, and breaking forth at moments into bursts of eloquence,—in its winning apostrophes, in its fulness alike of denunciation and of praise, some, at least, will recognise once more the workings of those marvellous gifts of head and heart, which erst held them as if spell-bound and enthralled, imparted to them fresh views of life, taught them much concerning themselves, much concerning the world around them, still more concerning the world unseen,—knowledge that cannot perish, thoughts that must abide with them their whole life long, lessons, of whose teacher they cannot but think, when, with good Bishop Andrewes, they thank their Maker for all who have benefitted them by their writings.

The works thus enumerated will be our principal, though not our sole, sources of information. We would fain employ them as the Roman philosopher professes to have used the writings of the Stoics: '*Sequimur, . . . non ut interpretes, sed . . . è fontibus eorum, judicio arbitrioque nostro, quantum quoque modo videbitur, hauriemus.*'<sup>1</sup>

Among the characteristics of the nation and of the land where Mahometanism first arose, there are some which exercised no inconsiderable influence upon the reception and promulgation of that creed. Of these it will be well to make some mention.

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, de Officiis, lib. i. cap. ii. § 6.

And firstly, if for freedom of thought there be needed a long previous training of civil and social freedom, it may safely be asserted that in few countries could there have existed a safer asylum than in Arabia. Protected upon one side by deserts, which few foreign enemies would venture to traverse; seldom spoken of by the Egyptians, who desired to keep all Indian as well as African commerce in their own hands, it was little known to either Greeks or Romans: and although the fame of the fertility and wealth of at least one district (that of Yemen) had given the country at large some celebrity as early as the time of Herodotus,<sup>1</sup> it was reserved for the Macedonian conqueror to conceive the idea of subduing it, and making it a seat of empire. That design, however, Alexander did not live to realize; nor do we find any account of a conquest of Arabia before the Christian era. About a century after Christ, the all-absorbing influence of Rome had indeed cast its shadow upon the land, and medals were being struck by Trajan in honour of this addition to the empire. But the vaunted conquest only extended to a province; so that of this and of other later foreign dominations Gibbon is obliged to admit that they have been only temporary or local; that the body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies; that neither Sesostris nor Cyrus, Pompey nor Trajan, had ever really become its master.

The Arab is considered by good judges to be a fine specimen of the human race, both in his

<sup>1</sup> Herod iii. 107.

physical and intellectual development.<sup>1</sup> Certainly no mere advantages of country could have availed to keep a people free, under the attacks of so many and powerful foes, without much courage and spirit on their own part. Great energy and strength of will seem conspicuous among them; and the strong attachment between those of the same tribe produced, as of old among the Highland clans of our own kingdom, much pure and generous sentiment, despite its tendency to the same grave faults of character. They have ever been respectful to their elders, and liberal in their hospitality; and their exceeding good faith towards one another is noticed by the father of history.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the tribes lived in tents, some in towns and cities. Although there seem to be instances of an alternation between predatory and mercantile pursuits on the part of some, yet commerce was naturally more flourishing among the inhabitants of the towns. Nor was merchandise considered in any way dishonourable: the noblest warriors united trade with the profession of arms. Indeed, the very name of the distinguished tribe (the Koreish, or, as French writers give it, Coraychites) from which Mahomet sprung, is thought to signify men of commerce.<sup>3</sup> And

<sup>1</sup> Chateaubriand, cited with approval by Dr. Pritchard (*Researches into Physical History of Mankind*.) See Art. *Arabia* in Dr. Smith's 'New Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography.'

<sup>2</sup> Σίβονται δὲ Ἀράβιοι πίστις ἀνθρώπων ὁμοῖα τοῖσι μάλιστα. (Supply *σεβομένοις* in this construction, says Matthiæ, 'Greek Grammar,' § 290.) Herod. iii. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Caussin (tom. i. pp. 229, 230) thinks this a very probable derivation of the word.

although the Koreish themselves may not have been descended from Ishmael, yet in both these features of character we may trace the influence of the tribes which owned that parentage. For while, on the one hand, this progenitor was to be 'a wild man, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against his,' yet we know that, in the third or fourth generation, the Ishmaelites were willing, as merchantmen, to purchase 'an Hebrew for a slave,' as they journeyed from Gilead to Egypt, with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh.<sup>1</sup>

The descent of a large portion of the Arabian tribes from Ishmael, although for very obvious reasons the subject of some sneers on the part of Gibbon, does not appear to have been in any degree shaken, but on the contrary confirmed by more recent research.<sup>2</sup> The remaining tribes, with a few comparatively unimportant exceptions, claimed descent from Kahtan, the son of Eber,—the Joktan of our version of the Bible,<sup>3</sup> the Yectan of the modern French writer. These last claim to be the oldest and purest race, the 'Arab-el-Araba,' or Arabs of the Arabs, a phrase which has naturally been compared with St. Paul's expression, 'an Hebrew of the Hebrews.' They and their probable descendants, the Koreish, occupied the north of the country: the Ishmaelites and their descendants (the Himyarites, the *Homeritæ* of classic authors) held the south.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis, xvi. 12; xxxvii. 25—28.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Forster, in his 'Mahometanism Unveiled,' is considered to have established this point, even by those who (like ourselves) are not prepared to accept his theories.

<sup>3</sup> Genesis, x. 25—29

Among the exceptions alluded to, seem to have been some of the descendants of Abraham by Keturah, and, subsequently, certain of the children of Esau. It is true that Herodotus,<sup>1</sup> and it appears also, Ibn-Khaldoun, agree with some ancient traditions in placing certain Cushite and Canaanite tribes in these regions: but these children of Ham disappeared; the Canaanites went to Syria, and there became famous under the title of Phœnicians; the Cushites concentrated themselves in Ethiopia. Any remnants of these Hamite tribes were engulfed by the dominant children of Shem; and thus, *from a very early period, Arabia has been inhabited by a purely Semitic race.*<sup>2</sup>

This circumstance will not appear unimportant to those who consider how largely it has pleased the Almighty to make the sons of Shem depositaries of spiritual truth. 'It had been suspected by Mr. Hallam,<sup>3</sup> from the tone of the romance of *Antár* (supposed to be pre-Mahometan), that however much idolatry might prevail in some parts of Arabia, still the genuine religion of the descendants of Ishmael was a belief in the unity of God as strict as the Koran itself can teach. This suspicion, which had been stated by other writers also, may now be considered as an established truth. To M. Caussin de Perceval belongs the credit of having done the most

<sup>1</sup> Herod. i. 1. Φοίνικας . . . ἀπὸ τῆς Ἐρυθρῆς καλεομένης θαλάσσης. See, however, the note of Bähr upon this passage. The Red Sea *may* be meant to include the Persian Gulf.

<sup>2</sup> Caussin, tom. i p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. of Middle Ages, vol. ii. chap. 6. (2d Note.)

towards its confirmation.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it will be seen, as we proceed, how seriously, before the rise of Mahomet, the monotheistic creed had been sullied and impaired.

We know from the vivid portraiture of Sir Walter Scott, how the principle of clanship which gives rise to so much that is striking and devoted in human nature, has likewise its less favourable side; of this unfavourable aspect the Arab displays his full share. 'Their own writers,' observes Sale, 'acknowledge that they have a natural disposition to war, bloodshed, cruelty, and rapine, being so much addicted to malice, that they scarce ever forget an old grudge.'<sup>2</sup> The same writer mentions an amusing theory of some physicians, to the effect that this vindictive spirit is engendered by the frequent use of camel's flesh as food; the camel being an animal most revengeful and tenacious of its anger: but the genuine Arab would hardly, we suspect, care to invent this, or any other palliation, for what he believed a blameless feeling. Other nations have at least had *sayings* on the duty of forgiveness,<sup>3</sup> if they have not attained to the *practice* of that virtue, which, even in Christians, is one of the highest and latest fruits of heaven-sent grace: but the Arabian is unblushing on this score.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. M. Renan, p. 1089.      <sup>2</sup> Preliminary Discourse, sect. i.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Trench (Hulsean Lectures, p. 155) alludes to a beautiful collection of Indian sayings of this kind. It must be owned that they do not exist in Greek or Roman writers; at least, we can only call to mind the fine exceptions in Cicero, Juvenal, and Homer, Il. ix. 492, *et seq.* The great speech of Demosthenes is not a real exception. He praises public and national pardons, which, after all, were in great part suggested by motives of policy.

Perhaps in estimating the intensity of clannish rivalry and vengeance among this people, we ought to take into account the circumstance that the Arabs, beyond all other nomadic tribes, have vividly expressed *the whole of what they felt*. Other people may have harboured sentiments in their breast, and waited till an opportunity arose to express them *in action*; but the dwellers in Arabia from an early age have prided themselves on the gift of language, and been passionately fond of poetry. Indeed they go so far as to imagine that their own is the only tongue possessing a grammar, and that all other dialects are but rude *patois*. One of their countrymen, who has travelled in France, the Sheik Rifaa, has been at great pains to remove this prejudice, and inform his brethren that the French language likewise has its own rules and elegances, and an academy to regulate them.<sup>1</sup> But, however much this ludicrous self-sufficiency betrays the spirit of a barbaric race, untaught by civilization even to approximate to a just estimate of the gifts of any nation, beyond themselves, yet the critiques of Oriental scholars seem to justify the Arabs in not thinking meanly of the capacities and refinements of their tongue. Translated into the languages of the West, it must, of course, suffer an almost unappreciable amount of injury. ‘In every language,’ says Southey, ‘there is a magic of words as untranslatable as the *Sesame* of the Arabian tale—you may retain the meaning, but if the words be changed the spell is lost. The magic has its effect only upon those to whom the language is as familiar as

<sup>1</sup> M. Renan.



‘their mother tongue; hardly, indeed, upon any ‘but those to whom it is really such.’<sup>1</sup> Hence, certainly, one great cause of the apparent poverty, to an European ear, of much that delighted and thrilled the hearts of the Asiatic hearers to whom it was first addressed.

F. von Schlegel, in his very able summary of the characteristics of the dwellers in Arabia, remarks: ‘Those tribe-feelings, and passions of ‘pride and hatred, anger and revenge, so prevalent among the Arabians, are displayed in their ‘ancient poetry, and even constitute its essential ‘spirit and purpose.’<sup>2</sup> Here, as in some other respects, this distinguished writer is perhaps *paullò iniquior* to the countrymen of Mahomet. Their loves, their liberality, their hospitality, their pride in their steeds, their fondness for poetry itself, at least claim a due share of the ancient Arab poems, as well as their love of pillage and their thirst for vengeance. But it is not to be denied that this last-named passion, so dear to the natural man, is frequently expressed with great vigour and gusto on the part of the minstrel. A specimen may perhaps interest the reader. In a battle between Arabs of Irak against the Ghas-sanide Arabs of Syria, Aswad, (king of Hira, from A.D. 471 to 491) overcame the Ghassanides, and took captive many of their princes. Aswad’s own inclination was to accept a ransom and restore his prisoners. But a cousin of the king, by name Abou-Odheyna, who had lost a brother in the conflict, urged, only too successfully, a more san-

<sup>1</sup> Quart. Rev. xxvii. 38, cit. ap. Hallam. Lit. of Europe, vol. ii. p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> Philosophy of History, Lecture xii. *ad init.*

guinary course of proceeding in the following very celebrated verses :—

‘ Man does not obtain what he desires every day ; and jealous fortune will not permit him to enjoy a success at his leisure.

‘ When we are in possession of opportunity, wisdom commands that we should not let it escape us.

‘ It is just to compel our enemies to drink of the cup whose bitterness they have made us taste.

‘ To slay them with the sword with which they first struck us.

‘ Mercy towards the weak is a virtue, towards the strong it is madness. Any contrary maxim is false.

‘ Thou hast killed one brother in battle, and thou wouldst leave the others alive. It would be drawing certain peril on thy head.

‘ Do not let go the serpent after having cut his tail ; if thou art wise, crush his head.

‘ They have bared the sabre, let them feel its edge ; they have kindled the fire, let them become its food.

‘ What will be said if thou sparest them ?—that it is not generosity on thy part, but a fear of consequences.

‘ For they are princes, the pride of the family of Ghassan ; a powerful family, whose ambition naturally desires thy kingdom.

‘ They offer us a ransom. They boast of their horses and milch camels, whose beauty charms all beholders.

‘ What ? For our blood, which they have shed, they offer us milk in exchange ? Of a surety the bargain would be glorious for us !

‘ No, no ! No ransom. Remember thou, that from us, in such a case, they would accept neither gold nor silver !’<sup>1</sup>

In this instance the poet was stimulated by the desire of producing a practical result. This, indeed, was regarded by the Arabs as one great end

<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. ii. p. 65. They have also been given, with a Latin translation, says M. Caussin, by Schultens (*Monumenta veterum Arabum*, p. 57,) and by M. Fleischer (*Histoire anteislamique*, p. 124.)

both of poetry and eloquence ;—a man who had thus persuaded his tribe to anything great, or dissuaded them from a dangerous enterprise, was thenceforth honoured with the title of *Khateb*, or orator. Among those who did not write poetry themselves, it was esteemed an accomplishment and mark of good birth to have been so educated as to quote with ease and aptness upon all occasions.<sup>1</sup> Another great aim of their poetry was to preserve, as in an historical record, the distinction of descents, the rights of tribes, and the memory of great achievements : hence a poet was deemed an honour to his tribe ; other tribes congratulated the fortunate one on their possession ; and at entertainments given in honour of the bard, the women wore their nuptial garments ;—only the birth of a son, and of a foal of generous breed, were celebrated with an equal degree of rejoicing. Once every year was a meeting held of all the tribes, at which poets contended for a prize. Their prize poems are known as the *Moallacat*.<sup>2</sup> Comparatively few have come down to us, as the use of writing was more rare before the age of Mahomet, or, as the Arabs would say, *in the time of ignorance*. We select a few examples from the curious researches of M. Caussin. It need hardly be said that the reader must not look for the logical sequence of the classic authors of Greece and Rome. The fulness of the periods, the elegance of the expression, and the allusive acuteness of the proverbial sayings, (frequently bearing

<sup>1</sup> Sale, Prelim. Discourse, sect. i.

<sup>2</sup> That is, *Poems suspended* ; for they were hung to the walls of the Caaba, the great temple of all Arabians, at Mecca. (Caussin ; Sale.)

reference to historic legends,) have been from the days even of the inspired Solomon, the attractions of Eastern composition ;—their verses are, indeed, as ‘ Orient pearls at random strung.’

Here is an extract from a prize-poem by Imroulcays, the founder of their laws of metre. It displays an observation of nature and enjoyment of its beauties which is but rarely exhibited in the pagan classics of the West :—

‘ My friend, seest thou those lightnings, which move like rapid hands, and flash above those mountains of clouds which they crown ?

‘ They throw a light brighter than the lamps of the solitary, whose hand has lavished on the twisted wick, the oil expressed from the sesame.

‘ I stop to watch them ; my companions also stop with me between Dhâridj and Odbrayb. At what an immense distance lay the picture that attracted my attention !

‘ The storm, as far as my eye could discern it, extended on the right to Mount Catan, and on the left to the mountains of Setan and Yadhbal.

‘ It shed on Coutayfa, torrents that overthrew the highest trees.

‘ It sent on the summit of Kenân a shower which drove the roes from their coverts.

‘ At Taymâ, the tempest has not left standing a palm-tree, nor a house ; only citadels made of enormous blocks of stones, have withstood its violence.

‘ Mount Thabîr, in the midst of clouds that dissolved into rain, looked like a venerable old man enveloped in a striped mantle.

‘ In the morning the summit of Moudjaymir, full of the tracks of the torrents, looked like the ‘clew of flax on a distaff.

‘ The storm in sending its waters on to the plain of Ghâbih, has renewed its verdure, and made blossoms burst forth ; so the merchant of Yemen, when he makes a halt, opens his bales, and displays a thousand varied stuffs.

‘ The birds of the valley are twittering with joy, as if they

were intoxicated since the dawn with a delicious and piquant wine.

‘The lions, which the torrents have carried off and drowned during the night, lie extended in the distance, along with feeble and weak plants uprooted on the ground.’

So important a feature in the poetic character was this love of nature considered, that life in towns was esteemed unfavourable to the development of the bard’s genius, because the townsman could not have the beauties of natural scenery continually before his eyes. But we hasten to afford proofs of the existence of some of the other themes of Arabian verse to which we have alluded. Hâtim, one of the noblest ante-Islamite chieftains of the tribe of Benôu Taij, on numberless occasions thoroughly acted up to the spirit of his generous professions. These words were addressed to his bride, Mâwia, a lady of such exalted rank as to entitle her to divorce her husband whenever she pleased. The latter part was written after she had exercised this privilege towards Hâtim himself.

‘Riches, oh, Mâwia, come in the morning, and depart at evening. They are transitory, but they can procure for man immortal renown.

‘Oh, Mâwia, in whatever state I am, never do I say to the man who begs of me, I have nothing to give thee.

‘Oh, Mâwia, when my owl (my soul) shall fly into the desert, and my body, laid in the tomb, shall taste no more either water or wine,

‘Shall I feel myself robbed of what I have given? Should I enjoy that which I had denied?

‘The world may know that Hâtim might be rich if he wished. But I devote to benevolence all that I acquire; and I nourish others to live in their memory.

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<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. ii. pp. 331, 332.

‘ I have known both riches and poverty ; I have tasted the two cups of fortune.

‘ Riches did not puff me up with pride, neither does poverty humiliate me.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘ Others are slaves to their wealth ; I, thanks be to God, dispose as I will of my own goods.

‘ I employ it in redeeming captives, in feeding travellers, in shedding benefits around me ; and I do not imitate the miser, who mingles reproaches with the little that he bestows.

‘ It is thus that men are divided into two classes ; groveling spirits delight in parsimony ; great souls delight in the glory of generosity.’<sup>1</sup>

We can only afford space for one more such extract. Zohayr (reckoned with Imroulcays and Nâbigha as the three greatest poets of the time of ignorance) laments, at the age of eighty, the wife of his youth, whom he had rashly divorced ; and subsequently appeals to chieftains of another tribe to keep inviolate a treaty of peace.

‘ Are these the traces of the sojourn of Oumm-Aufa, these mute remains of an encampment on the stony soil of Darrâdj and Motethallem ?

‘ Has Oumm-Aufa, occupied between the two Racma, this abode, whose vestiges are like prints newly touched on the flesh of the arm ?

‘ There wander by turns, troops of white gazelles, and herds of wild cows, with large eyes ; their little ones leaving their hiding-places, bound along beside their mothers.

‘ I am again in these places, which I have not beheld for twenty years. Scarcely do I recognize them. At last my doubts vanish.

‘ These stones, blackened by the fire, served to support the kettles ; this circular bowl-like trench not yet degraded, surrounded the tent of Oumm-Aufa.

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<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. ii. pp. 614, 626.

'Yes, I remember this place ; and I exclaim, Abode of my beloved, may this dawn bring thee a happy day, may Heaven preserve thee !

\* \* \* \* \*

My friend, send these counsels to the Dhobyân and their allies ; say to them, Are you not bound by the strongest oaths to observe peace ?

'Do not attempt to conceal from God your secret thoughts ; God knows all that is hidden.

'If sometimes he delays his vengeance, he writes it in the book of his decrees, and reserves it till the day when he will demand an account from each one of his actions ; often also he punishes crime by a sudden chastisement.

'You know the evils of discord ; you have felt them by bitter experience, and it is not on doubtful reports of them that you have formed your opinion.

'If you rekindle war, you will bring ignominy on yourselves ; war, like a wild beast, will attack you furiously if you rouse it ; as a fire, will it burn you ; as a mill bruises the grain, will it crush you ; as a camel, which brings forth twins every year, will it be fertile to you in evils.'

One circumstance revealed in these poems is the excessive amount of gambling, of drunkenness, and consequent quarrelling prevalent among the pre-Islamite Arabs. Of the other positive qualities of their poetry we have already spoken. But it is time to remark upon one negative feature—we mean the total absence of anything like religious mysticism. If, in a later day, a mystic philosophy arose in the Arabian peninsula, that philosophy may be traced to Persia for its origin.<sup>2</sup> But Arabia had neither mysticisms nor mythology ; between the Creator and the created universe there existed too profound a gulf to be bridged over by the lines of connexion imagined by the Hindoo or the Greek. The incarnations of a

<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. ii. pp. 531, 532.

<sup>2</sup> M. Renan.

Buddha, the anthropomorphic visions of a Jove or Pallas, a Mars or a Diana, would have been in early time simply repulsive to the Arabian understanding. The very notion of a *goddess* would have shocked them hardly less than it would have shocked a sincere Hebrew. The idea is perhaps essentially *anti-Semitic*. The Greek and Roman worshippers of goddesses were sons of Japhet; and, if the idolatrous king of Judah 'went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians;'<sup>1</sup> if degenerate Jews could 'burn incense unto the queen of heaven ;'<sup>2</sup> in both instances these sinful practices were learnt from children of the race of Ham.

Nevertheless, that deep pervading consciousness of sinfulness, impurity, and consequent unfitness for immediate access to an all-holy and glorious God, which is so frequently found to dwell even in the heart of unregenerate man, will naturally lead the worshipper to seek for something which may stand between himself and his invisible, eternal Maker. To the Christian this want is supplied by the sublime verity of the Incarnation, and its ordained accompaniment, a sacramental religion. For the Jew there was the hope of the promised Messiah, and meanwhile the presence of that Law, which was 'ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator'—the prophet 'whom the Lord knew face to face,' and who pleaded for Israel on Mount Sinai.<sup>3</sup> The pantheistic creeds, Buddhist or Braminical, which have prevailed so extensively, not only in the East, but likewise in pagan, and,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xi. 5.      <sup>2</sup> Jeremiah xlv. 16—19.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iii. 19; Deut. xxxiv. 10.



alas! even in Christian, Europe, have their own way of evading, if not of fairly meeting the difficulty. But where neither pantheism, nor Judaism, nor Christianity prevailed, there seemed to remain for the sinner, who would fain approach his Maker and yet shrunk from direct appeal, the refuge of idolatry alone.

At the time of Mahomet's appearance, Arabia possessed votaries of nearly all these creeds. Just as in matters of state, some tribes were under Roman domination, some under that of Persia, some alternating between the rule of the two sceptres, and some, if nominally subject, yet practically free; even so was the inward life of the nation disunited and distracted between various forms of faith. Judaism prevailed extensively in Yemen; Christianity in Irak, Syria, and parts of the desert between Palestine and Egypt; but the majority, and more especially the entire race of Modhar, were buried in the darkness of paganism.

Judaism had been introduced into Yemen (the *Arabia Felix* of geographers) by Abou-Carib, a *Tobba*, or king, of the Himyarites, about A. D. 235. Tradition said that the ministers of the false gods, with their idols, and some Jewish doctors, with their sacred books, had been compelled to enter a particular fire, which was believed by the inhabitants of the district to possess great powers of discrimination, and regularly appealed to in all trials of importance. The Jews, with their books upon their breasts, came out safe and unhurt; their rivals and the idols were utterly consumed.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, Judaism did not make

<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. i. p. 95.

any considerable progress until the commencement of the sixth century, when a king called Dhou-Nowàs propagated it with great zeal. This zeal led him to become a persecutor of Christianity; and his shameful treatment of the Christians of the district of Nadjrân was probably the main cause of the ruin of the Himyarite monarchy.<sup>1</sup>

Christianity, notwithstanding some local and temporary triumphs, seems never to have taken thorough root in the soil of Arabia. S. Pantæus is believed, on apparently good authority, to have preached the Gospel there towards the close of the second century, and to have discovered traces of S. Bartholomew:<sup>2</sup> but the converts make but little show in history. One Himyarite prince, Abd-Kelâl, who reigned from A. D. 273 to 297, (about the time of S. Pantæus,) was beyond doubt a Christian. And what was the result of his conversion? He did not dare to avow it openly; but his subjects, finding that he had renounced their worship, rose against him, slew him, and the Syrian missionary who had been his enlightener.<sup>3</sup> Another sovereign of the same dynasty, Marthan, (A. D. 330—350), has likewise been claimed for a Christian, but in reality only, it would seem, because he exhibited in his kingdom the rare spectacle of universal toleration, being wont to say, 'I reign over bodies, not opinions. I require of my subjects that they obey my government; as for their doctrines, it is for God their Creator to judge them.'<sup>4</sup> This king was a wise ruler, generous and powerful; but it

<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. i. pp. 128, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius says (Hist. Eccles. v. 10,) that he reached India.

<sup>3</sup> Caussin.

<sup>4</sup> Idem.

may be questioned whether such notions as his are often preludes to the acceptance of Christianity. A few churches were, indeed, built in his reign, through the influence of the Roman Emperor in the East, Constantius, but Christians remained few and isolated. Their neighbours the Abyssinians were Christians, and avenged the murderous persecutions of Dhou-Nowâs. The noble race of Ghassan were in part converted, probably about the date of the edicts of Constantine, in favour of Christianity in the fourth century: and at a much later date (about A.D. 600) a tribe called the Taghlibites, in Mesopotamia. It is worthy of observation that S. Simeon Stylites (about A.D. 410) made considerable impression upon them. We need hardly add, what is painfully well known, that the Arab independence of thought displayed itself even among the Christians in an acceptance of nearly every kind of heresy. There might be found in the peninsula, Arians, Eutychians, Nestorians, and Ebionites; partisans of Beryllus, the Collyridians, and the Nazareans.<sup>1</sup>

The form of idolatry most in vogue was that known as the Sabian, which at the time of Cyrus divided the world with the Magian, or worship of fire.<sup>2</sup> Their idols, though in theory admitted to be intercessors only with Allah, received in reality far more of homage and attention. The sun and moon were adored by some, certain of the planets by others; some made prayers to Sirius, some to that fine star which even in Europe is best known by its Arab name of Alde-

<sup>1</sup> The authorities are given by Sale, sect. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Prideaux's *Connexion*, &c. part i. book iii.

baran.<sup>1</sup> Some of their superstitions were dark and cruel. Those who believed in a future life would often slay a camel on the tomb of a relation or friend, or, far worse, fasten it and let it die of hunger, that it might be ready to be ridden by the deceased on the day of judgment. They thought, too, that the soul flitted over the grave in the form of an owl (a belief alluded to in one of the poems we have cited); and that if the person had been murdered the bird cried '*Escourri*' (i. e. give me drink), and ceased not till the blood of the murderer had been shed. But the most revolting and inhuman of their customs was one that obtained in some quarters of burying alive a female infant immediately it was born. This most wicked and unnatural practice arose sometimes from the reluctance to share nourishment with one who could not aid in the fight and foray, sometimes from a fierce and excessive pride, lest they should ever chance to endure the shame of seeing a daughter carried off and dishonoured by their enemies. Belief in genii and ghouls, (so well known to us as pervading the more recent scenery of the immortal '*Thousand and One Nights*,') was likewise very widely extended. And although the Arabs would have probably shrunk, (as has been intimated,) even in their worst days, from imagining a goddess so nearly on a level with Jupiter as Juno, yet the angels whom they worshipped were considered to be feminine, and called *Benat-Allah*, or daughters of God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This star, which is of great importance in navigation, forms the eye of Taurus near the Pleiades. A line through Orion's belt upwards almost touches it, just as the downward line from the same belt leads to Sirius.

<sup>2</sup> Caussin.

The Arab women frequently display, in scenes of history, great devotedness and affection as mothers, but very seldom as wives. The reason is obvious; polygamy being unrestricted, and divorce at will on the part of the husband, and (in case of very noble birth) on the side of the wife also, a woman might well regard her son as her own, but how could she venture to call her husband so? She possessed, so to speak, but a share of him at best, and the duration even of that share was never certain and assured. Moreover, before the rise of Mahometanism, a widow was considered as a part of the heritage of her deceased husband; and thence arose unions between sons-in-law and mothers-in-law, which were afterwards justly stigmatized as odious.<sup>1</sup> No wonder that a sort of vague syncretism was the creed of many: Jewish and Christian ideas insinuated themselves in some degree even into the minds of pagans. The famous temple, common to all the tribes, at Mecca, the Caaba,<sup>2</sup> had become a kind of Pantheon; and, strange to say, among the images of idols, there

<sup>1</sup> Caussin.

<sup>2</sup> We do not dwell upon the Caaba, because it has so often been described. A picture (from an old MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford) is given by Ockley, in his 'History of the Saracens,' and a similar one by Sale. It was certainly a very ancient building: and the statue of Abraham is supposed, with reason, to indicate an Ishmaelite origin. The Koreish, as is well known, had enjoyed the custody of this temple for many years before the birth of Mahomet. Cossay, the first of that tribe who obtained it, rebuilt the temple about A. D. 450. (Caussin, Sale, Ockley, Irving, &c.) In the centre was the famous black stone, given to Ishmael by the angel Gabriel. It was originally white; but became black, either from the effects of fire, or, as other authors maintained, from the sins of those who touched it. (Caussin, Chrichton, &c.)

was a Byzantine figure of the Madonna, holding the Divine Infant in her arms.<sup>1</sup>

Such were the leading characteristics of that nation, whose boast it was that God had bestowed upon them four great and peculiar privileges: that their turbans should be their diadems; their tents their homes; their swords their entrenchments; and their poems their laws.<sup>2</sup> If a philosophic observer, like Thucydides, had cast his glance upon them, he might possibly have conjectured, (as that historian almost prophetically said of the Scythians,)<sup>3</sup> that if once at unity among themselves, they would be most difficult to resist. Unity was in store for both. The Scythians attained it under the sway of those great and terrible conquerors, Attila, Zingis, and Timour; the Arabians under the teaching and rule of Mahomet.

Some years before the preaching of Mahomet, there appeared among the idolatrous natives of Arabia, certain signs of distrust and dissatisfaction with the state of religion. At a great meeting of the tribe of the Koreish, four men, who seem to have been in advance of their countrymen, held a secret meeting, and imparted to each other their sentiments. 'Our fellow-countrymen,' said they, 'are in a wrong path, they are far astray from the religion of Abraham. What is this pretended divinity to which they immolate victims, and around which they make solemn processions? A dumb and senseless block of stone, incapable of good or evil. It is all a mistake: seek we

<sup>1</sup> Renan, Caussin.

<sup>2</sup> Sale.

<sup>3</sup> Thucyd. ii. 97.

‘the truth, seek we the pure religion of our father  
‘Abraham? To find it, let us quit our country,  
‘if need be, and traverse foreign lands.’

The four who thus spake were Waraca, son of Naufal; Othman, son of Houwayrith; Obaydallah, son of Djahch; and Zayd, son of Amr. How deep-seated was their sense of a religious void, how sincere their craving after truth, how earnest their search after its hidden treasures, may be gathered from the fact that three out of the four (namely, Waraca, Othman, and Obaydallah) became converts to the faith of Christ: Waraca and Othman without any intermediate state of transition; Obaydallah, after having lived long enough to try, but without satisfaction of his heart’s needs, the creed of the Arabian seer.<sup>1</sup>

Whether there was anything in the inmost soul of Zayd which made it less fit for the reception of divine truth than those of his companions, the Judge of all men can alone decide. He was certainly less favoured in external circumstances. His comrades received the Faith, more or less directly, from the teaching of strangers; but the relatives of Zayd, offended at his evident estrangement from pagan superstitions, would not suffer him to travel, and consult the wise of other lands. Detained at Mecca, Zayd went day by day to the Caaba, and prayed the Almighty to enlighten

<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. i. p. 321, et alibi. Waraca had, however, entertained the idea that an Arabian prophet was at hand, and so spoke to his cousin Kadijah as rather to confirm her belief in her husband, Mahomet. (Caussin, tom. i. p. 356.) But this may possibly have taken place before his conversion—which, by the way, M. Renan (p. 1090) omits altogether—unless Waraca regarded Mahomet as an ultimate apostle of Christianity.

him. He might be seen leaning his back against the wall of the temple, deep in meditation, which constantly issued in the following prayer: 'Lord! 'if I knew in what way thou didst will to be 'adored and served, I would obey thy will; but I 'know it not.' And he would fall prostrate, with his face upon the earth.

Though not permitted to attain the full knowledge of what was true and right, Zayd could at least denounce much that was false and wrong. He adored the Divine Unity, publicly attacked the false gods, and declaimed energetically against various superstitions. Among others, he forbade men to eat the flesh of victims offered to idols, (a most remarkable injunction,) and strove to inspire his countrymen with a just detestation of their shocking practice of destroying their infant daughters. Imprisoned by an uncle, he contrived to escape, wandered from place to place, heard at length (strange to say, from a learned Christian monk,) that an Arab prophet had arisen, who was preaching the religion of Abraham at Mecca. This was Mahomet. Zayd hastened back to hear him, but was robbed and murdered on the road. He may fairly be regarded as a kind of precursor of Mahomet himself. His very existence, however, says M. Caussin de Perceval, has been hitherto almost unnoticed by European *savans*.

We have dwelt at great, we fear at unreasonable and disproportionate, length upon these points of Arab character and pre-Mahometan history; partly, because they are probably but little known, even to many well-informed persons; partly, because they must necessarily exercise no



inconsiderable influence upon our judgment of Mahomet and his work. But although we propose to offer, as has been stated, some remarks upon these last-named subjects, yet it forms no portion of our plan to give a sketch of the Arabian teacher's life. On this head, the reader may refresh his memory by referring to the famous fiftieth chapter of Gibbon, or may learn something of the more recent researches of Dr. Weil, by purchasing at a railway station the pages of Mr. Washington Irving.

His noble birth, of the family of the Hashemites, of the tribe of the Koreish: his journeys as a mercantile traveller, for the wealthy widow, Kadijah, who in course of time offered him her hand, and thus made him independent: his love of solitude and meditation in the lonely valleys around Mecca: the commencement of his preaching in the forty-first year of his age: the ridicule and persecution at first entailed upon him: his scanty band of early proselytes, made even slenderer by his account of his famous journey by night to Heaven: his flight from Mecca, the victory at Beder and defeat at Ohod: his failure to win the Jews, and consequent hostility towards them: his assassination (through the hand of others) of his enemies, Khalid, Cab, and other leading Jews: his breach of his own laws concerning matrimony, and subsequent revelations to justify his conduct: his embassies to sovereign princes, the letters sealed with a signet **MOHAMMED - APOSTLE - OF - GOD**, within six years after the era of the Hegira (the well-known flight of A. D. 622): his discussions with Christians: his re-instalment of the vague old lunar calendar of

Arabia: his contests with rival prophets, El-Aswad, Moseilama, Toulayha: his illness and death—these are matters of history, which we shall, if necessary, assume and reason upon, without going into further details, excepting where they are wanted for an ulterior end, or illustrate what has already been advanced.

It is necessary, however, to premise that the sources of information for the life of Mahomet are of a twofold character, one appertaining to the Persian or Turkish histories, the other to that of the Arabian biographers. The Arabian alone are trustworthy, the Turkish and Persian accounts being full of legendary matter. In Pindaric language, we must seek from Mahomet's fellow-countrymen the *ἀλαθῇ λόγον*, while from Turkey and Persia spring the *δεδαυδαλμένοι ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις . . . . μῦθοι*. This distinction, however, in the relative value of authorities, does not appear, in general, to have received from European writers the degree of attention which it deserves. Even Dr. Weil, in the opinion of M. Renan, has not been sufficiently alive to its importance. But those who would fain study deeply the subject of Mahometanism and its founder, should certainly be on their guard in this respect.

Before proceeding to more serious questions, we may venture to exhibit one proof of the manner in which the tribe-rivalry, which has been alluded to, at first operated to the disadvantage of Mahomet. At an early period of his career as teacher, an order was issued by the Koreish, forbidding men, at their peril, to listen to him. When, therefore, he prayed in the porch of the Caaba, and recited aloud a chapter of the Koran,

he found himself immediately deserted. Curiosity, however, proved too strong. Certain chiefs, who were among the authors of the prohibition, were the first to break their own regulations. Three, named respectively Aboudjahl, Abou-Sofyan, and Akhnas, went near his house one night to listen to his prayers: none knew of his comrade's intentions, and great was their mutual astonishment, as they came forth, each man from his hiding-place. The sequel shall be given from M. Caussin:—

‘They mutually reproached each other for their curiosity, and promised not to yield to it again: nevertheless, the two nights following, the same scene took place. They then bound themselves by an oath not again to expose themselves to the temptation, and to maintain a profound silence on the affair.

‘Akhnas had been touched. He wished to know what impression had been made on his companions. He went to Abou-Sofyan and said, “Father of Hanzhala, what thinkest thou of what thou hast heard?”—“I understood some things,” replied Abou-Sofyan; “I found others above my comprehension.” Akhnas went on to the abode of Aboudjahl, and put the same query to him. Aboudjahl replied, with some vexation, “Hitherto we have been competitors for fame with the children of Abdmanâf on equal terms: they fed the poor, we fed them too; they paid the forfeits of others, we paid them also; they gave largesses, we gave them as well; our families were like race-horses, galloping side by side. And now we are to allow that they have amongst them a prophet inspired by Heaven. No! never will we believe in Mahomet!”’<sup>1</sup>

To turn, however, to deeper problems. A writer who undertakes to treat of the subject of Mahometanism is expected to enunciate some opinion upon the character of Mahomet himself, and like-

<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. i. pp. 383, 384.

wise upon the causes of his very marvellous and permanent success. With the latter problem we shall hardly attempt to grapple, although it may possibly receive some slight elucidation from the general views which will be set forth. But of Mahomet's character, so far as regards the question of his being a thoroughly self-conscious impostor, or the reverse, we must venture to speak plainly, and give reasons for the conclusions we have formed.

Be it avowed, then, that we think it impossible for any calm and candid investigator of the subject, as it appears amidst the lights cast upon it by the researches of this present century, to regard Mahomet *as a mere impostor*. A false prophet he was, if it be the mark of a false prophet to preach falsehood as well as truth, and to claim (whether from delusion or imposture) a mission which is not from the Most High. A shadow of Antichrist, he must, we fear, in some sense be termed, if that last great enemy of the Church is to win his temporary power through the abounding of heresy among Christians, and is to claim that position among mankind which is due only to the Son of Man.<sup>1</sup> But by a mere impostor we understand such pretended Messiahs as the Jews

<sup>1</sup> It is right, however, to remark, that Mahometan Doctors esteem it an article of faith that Christ will return and conquer Antichrist, concerning whom they have a great deal to tell. See Möhler, p. 859. He cites an Arab poem, of which a verse is Latinized as follows: 'At Jesus certè reveniet, aliquando contra Antichristum miserum astutumque, quem tunc perdet.' The consistency of this and other Mahometan teachings (as, e.g., the truth of the miraculous conception) concerning our Lord, with His assumed inferiority to Mahomet, it is not easy to understand. Antichrist, under the name of Degial, is alluded to in 'Sinbad the Sailor.'

have again and again accepted (which claimant, alas! except the true one, ever failed to find some acceptance with them?); such a teacher, for example, as that pseudo-Moses in Crete, who said that he had come again from Heaven to lead them through the sea once more, and was followed by numbers, to their destruction;<sup>1</sup> such a deluder as, in fiction, is set before us in Moore's 'Veiled Prophet'—a picture, perhaps, hardly overdrawn; such a juggler of real history as Moseilama, supporting his pretensions by the display of an egg in a narrow-necked bottle,—a chemical trick, with which an Arab author, Tarikh-el-Khamicy, has shown himself perfectly acquainted;<sup>2</sup> such leaders as those half-ascetics, half-charlatans, who have founded a kind of religious orders in Algeria. Such a one as these, Mahomet, we believe, was not; however much his sincerity may have been dimmed and tarnished on particular occasions, more especially amidst the complications of his later years.

In adopting this conclusion, we are well aware that we are running counter to the judgment of many whom we respect, and shall seem to be throwing our lot with the partisans of latitudinarianism and unbelief. Look, it will be urged, at the great names arrayed against such an opinion of Mahomet; take into account the admixture of Judaism and Christianity with Islamism; think of the fruits of this religion as displayed in its long, bitter, and enduring hostility to the Cross; consider the stains of voluptuousness and revenge which disfigure the

<sup>1</sup> Socrates, *Hist. Eccles.* vii. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Caussin tom. iii. p. 310.

character of the son of Abdallah; remember the convenient nature of those revelations which were brought out at the exact juncture when they were needed to justify particular (and those very questionable) acts. Well, we have tried to ponder these objections, and allow to each of them their due weight. And, firstly, as regards the authority of great names, we cannot allow them to be decisive in a question of this nature. Unless proved to rest upon a sound basis, their judgments can but serve to remind us of the Aristotle-suggested saying, *Amicus Plato, magis amica veritas*. And while it ever must remain most true, that the hatred of evil is concomitant with the love of goodness, upspringing with its birth, and growing with its growth, and that we are bound not to employ euphemistic terms concerning that which is wrong, nor put light for darkness, nor sweet for bitter; yet, assuredly, if in our denunciations we overstep the bounds of equity and truth, the truth will be most fearfully avenged. Undue re-action, as has been already intimated, has perhaps been thus brought about respecting Mahomet. Known to the earlier middle age under the names of *Maphomet*, *Baphomet*, *Bafum*, (whence the French words *bafumerie* and *momerie*, our English *mawmetry* and *mummery*,)<sup>1</sup> as a false god to whom human sacrifices were offered;<sup>2</sup> hardly understood, it would seem, in Western Christendom before the twelfth century, to be a pseudo-prophet only, and not a pretended divinity; regarded by Bibliander, Hottinger and Maracci, in the sixteenth and

<sup>1</sup> M. Renan. Cf. Trench, *On the Study of Words*.

<sup>2</sup> Renan.

seventeenth centuries *only* in the light of an antagonist to Christianity—a most true, but certainly imperfect and one-sided aspect of the founder of Islamism—it can hardly be deemed a marvel that later generations should have to witness a kind of turn in the tide of feeling. And let not those who may be inclined to look only upon the darker side of the character and creed of the Arabian, imagine that in so doing they are of necessity allying themselves with the wise and good alone, in opposition to men of questionable character. The case does not stand thus. On the one hand, those who would impute to Mahomet a very large amount of conscious imposture, may find much to support their views in the sentiments of the sceptical Gibbon: those who would picture him as a monster of cruelty and injustice, will find the portrait already drawn to hand by the *crayon* of the infidel Voltaire. For Mahomet, however much he fell short of a high standard of religious faith and practice, yet displayed a great deal too much of both to please the unbelieving Frenchman. Voltaire, accordingly, besides contemptuous notices in prose, has represented Mahomet (in a tragedy, of which he is the chief character) in the blackest tints. The play, though extolled by La Harpe as *chef-d'œuvre*, is justly, we believe, represented to be as contradictory to the facts of history, as it is to all correct views of Arabian customs. But then Voltaire has admitted that he was unsupported by facts, and has betrayed the secret of his enmity to the memory of Mahomet, by maintaining that such a representation is *virtually* true, on the ground ‘*que celui qui fait la guerre à sa patrie*

*au nom de Dieu, est capable de tout.*"<sup>1</sup> While, on the other hand, those who, with us, are unable to see in Mahomet a mere pretender, may range themselves under the banner of one whom both friends and opponents will recognise as one of the noblest examples of sanctified intellect which this century has seen,—the calm, the candid, the truly Christian Möhler. Those who have studied the essay of Möhler will hardly, we suspect, lay much stress upon the second point adduced against belief in Mahomet's original sincerity, the admixture, namely, which his creed presents, of tenets and usages from the other religions existent in Arabia before his time. Is it really conceivable, we would rather ask, that he *could* have framed a system which should be quite independent of the influence of those around? And if, again, the prolonged and savage hostility of the Crescent to the Cross prove that Mahometanism combined in its essence, a great lie with a most solemn truth; if Satan contrived, with consummate craft, to turn its weaknesses and falsities, thus mingled with eternal verities, into an instrument of evil which no unmitigated error could have proved; nay, even if there was that within Mahomet's own heart which contained the germ of all this mischief,—it would still remain to be proved, that he was either an insincere or an hopelessly wicked man. Not necessarily insincere, because in error; for thus should we impute insincerity to all those who, in killing apostles, thought that they did God service: or even to that ardent Pharisee, who, before his conversion, raged furiously against the infant Church.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Chrichton, p. 222 (note).



Not necessarily bad : excepting in so far as the adoption of erroneous belief betrays some yielding to one of the three forms of temptation by which man is assailed,—the whisperings of that subtler spirit who, when Belial or Mammon have done their best and worst, comes forward with the allurements to singularity in creed, and spiritual pride, and domination over the spirits of our fellow-men. It is to this third, this most exalted, and therefore most fatal enchantment, that all great heresiarchs have fallen a prey ; yet they need not therefore, in the commencement of their career, have yielded to the two former lusts of sensuality or gold and temporal rule ; need not have been immoral, nor covetous, nor tyrannical, nor even hypocrites. Pelagianism has been, in many respects, a far more unmixed source of evil than Mahometanism : but did the great antagonist of Pelagian heresy pursue its author with invectives only ? On the contrary, S. Augustine treats with respect both the abilities and the character of Pelagius ; calling him ‘ most acute ; ’ ‘ circumspect ; ’ ‘ one who is, as those who know him declare, good, and to be extolled ; ’ ‘ of chaste life, and praiseworthy morals ; ’ ‘ a man who is eminently Christian.’<sup>1</sup> Between Mahomet and Pelagius there cannot be any proper comparison : whatever were the faults of the former, he had not been, like Pelagius, brought up as one of the children of

<sup>1</sup> ‘ Vir acutissimus . . . . circumspectus . . . . istum, sicut eum qui noverunt loquantur, bonum ac prædicandum virum . . . ipsi qui contra hæc disputant cum sint castâ vitâ, moribusque laudabiles . . . . vir ille tam egregiè Christianus.’—S. Aug. De Peccat. Meritis et Remissione (tom. x. p. 73 C ; p. 54 B ; p. 74 B. Ed. Ben.)

Christ's flock. Mahomet's revengefulness of temper does not seem to have been greater, if it were not less, than that of the average specimen of an Arab; neither do the annals of his early years present any feature which is morally reprehensible. But the remaining objection, that Mahomet produced fresh chapters of the Koran to justify his own acts, is certainly more serious, and needs some fuller consideration.

The circumstances were as follows:—Zayd, son of Haritha (not to be confounded with the Zayd already named, who was son of Amr), had been adopted as a son by Mahomet. The prophet himself had given one of his cousins to Zayd in marriage, a lady who united much elegance of mind to great personal beauty—Zeynab, the daughter of Djahch. On a visit to Zayd's house, Mahomet was deeply struck with the charms of Zeynab, and uttered words of admiration, which were probably involuntary. But Zayd being informed of this, insisted on resigning his wife to one from whom he had received great benefits; and Zeynab certainly appears to have displayed no reluctance to make the exchange. Murmurs, however, were heard from some, it being contrary to Arabian usage, that any man should take the wife of an adopted son, however formally she might have been divorced. These murmurs were disregarded: the marriage was celebrated with greater magnificence than any of his former nuptials; and in the Koran (chap. xxxiii.) came forth a general permission to the Mussulmans to marry henceforth the divorced wives of adopted sons. The other occasion of this kind is far more lowering to his character. In March A.D. 630, his Coptic slave, Maria, gave birth to a son. In joy of the event,

—for he had no male issue—he enfranchised her. The son died at the end of the year, and according to Arabian usage, Maria having ceased to be a slave, was likewise obliged to resign a position which had been similar to that of Hagar in Holy Scripture. Mahomet's unwillingness thus to part led to quarrels with Hafsa, one of his wives, and subsequently with the rest. Hafsa he divorced, and the rest he kept separate for a month; but on the intercession of his fathers-in-law, Omar and Abu Beker, reinstated all into their old positions. He had first, however, by a fresh addition to the Koran (chap. lxvi.) freed himself from the oath he had made to Hafsa to resign Maria; and, in the same chapter, lectured his wives for their revolt.

Those who believe Mahomet to have been in the main sincere, may yet consider that on these, and some other occasions, he was inconsistent. Those who denounce him as wholly hypocritical, have, of course, not failed to make the most of such an extraordinary course of procedure. The former of these conclusions is the one hinted at by Gibbon and Mr. Carlyle; and followed in the main by Dr. Weil, Mr. Irving, M. Renan, and others: the latter is that of men so different as Dean Prideaux and Voltaire. There is, however, a third line of argument, that, namely, in palliation of Mahomet's conduct, which is vigorously urged by Dr. Möhler. And it is only fair that it should be set forth; which we proceed to do, without committing ourselves either to the acceptance or rejection of the professor's views upon what appears to us a very curious and difficult question of psychology.

Möhler, then, after narrating, almost as we have

done, the above transactions, asks what judgment we are to form upon them? do they not indicate the most thoroughly conscious deceit? Such, he observes, was the opinion of Voltaire, who supported his view of Mahomet by reference to the affair of Zayd. But 'I,' he replies, 'hold such a view to be unhistorical; and maintain that if one admits the possibility of his own individual impressions, ideas, and thoughts passing, without suspicion, for divine inspirations, I cannot perceive the impossibility of his considering God to be the Author of all his other inward impulses.' He then refers to the Herodotean account of the practice of the daughters of Babylon at the temple of Mylitta,<sup>2</sup> and similar disgraceful customs in Carthage, Malta, Cyprus, Phœnicia, Syria, and India, (he might have added Nicaragua and Peru,) as a proof how men may come to regard the basest rites as allowable, and even divinely authorized. Mahomet, he proceeds to say, was in the above transactions inspired by the same spirit as these—to wit, an earthly spirit (*Erdgeiste*). It was certainly a relapse into sheer paganism; 'but it is likewise,' adds Möhler, 'at the same time clear, that he might be convinced of the divinity of that inspiration, and act upon it in good faith. The *bona fides* of Mahomet is especially evident from this, that the two events in question were the occasion of two *Suras* (i. e. chapters) of the

<sup>1</sup> 'Ich halte eine solche Betrachtungsweise für unhistorisch und gestehe, dass ich, wenn man die Möglichkeit zugibt, seine individuellen religiösen Empfindungen, Vorstellungen und Gedanken für Gottliche Inspirationen ganz arglos auszugeben, die Unmöglichkeit nicht begreife, Gottauch als Urheber seiner übrigen inneren Bewegungen zu betrachten.'—P. 368 (note).

<sup>2</sup> Herod. book i. c. 199. He calls it, ὁ αἰσχιστος τῶν νόμων.

'Koran. Surely he would never have immortalised them in this manner if he had been conscious of evil.'<sup>1</sup> He further demands, how it came to pass that these events caused no diminution of the respect paid to Mahomet, as a prophet, by his followers; and were not adduced until modern times, to raise any doubt concerning his sincerity.

Such is the defence of Möhler. We leave it to do its work, simply observing, that while the phrase of an 'earthly spirit' seems somewhat lenient in such cases, and suggests the other epithets which an inspired writer has on one occasion added,<sup>2</sup> yet that learned men (we give an instance in a foot-note)<sup>3</sup> corroborate this view of Babylonian rites, and that the subsequent arguments are certainly deserving of the fullest consideration. But whatever be the reader's conclusion on these points, there remains an amount of positive evidence for the general sincerity of Mahomet, the force of which it is most difficult to gainsay. It may be, that the power of allurements which spiritual conquest over other hearts possesses for a mind like his, is somewhat overlooked by

<sup>1</sup> 'Es leuchtet aber auch zugleich ein, dass er von der Göttlichkeit jener Inspiration überzeugt seyn und *bonâ fide* handeln konnte. Die *bona fides* Mahommeds ist aber besonders daraus ersichtlich, dass ihm die beiden beigebrachten Thatfachen Veranlassung zu zwei Suren gaben. Gewiss aber würde er das Andenken an die selben nicht in dieser Weise verewigt haben wenn er sich des Bösen bewusst gewesen wäre.'—P. 369.

<sup>2</sup> S. James, iii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> 'Neque omninò è corruptis Babyloniorum moribus hunc morem explicari posse aut origines cepisse, quivis, me vel non animadvertente, sentiet. Ad ipsam enim religionem prævasque de diis conceptas opiniones respiciendum esse, ubi hæc et talia legimus, vix dubitandum,' &c.—Bähr in Herod. lib. i. cap. 199; (tom. i. p. 445. Lipsiæ, 1830.)

Irving, Caussin, and even by Möhler. But, taking into account the natural workings of an ardent imagination (exalted by meditation and solitude) on one who appeared at a season when many of his countrymen were looking for fresh light, and some even expecting the advent of a prophet; the late period of life at which he announced his mission; the conviction of Kadijah and of others most dear to him, who had known him from his earliest youth; the endurance for twelve years of every species of raillery, insult, and persecution; the utter rejection of all offers of wealth and chieftainship, when made on the condition of his discontinuing his efforts; the simplicity of his mode of life to the very last. (dates and water frequently the only food of himself and his household, and sometimes no fire in the house for a whole month;) the thorough confidence in-wrought into the minds of such men as Omar and Abu Beker; we cannot, we repeat, see in this man the merely ambitious conqueror, or the deceiver, without faith in himself or his own mission.<sup>1</sup> And then, again, the Koran: poor and monotonous as it may well appear besides the pages of the inspired seers of Israel; wearisome as its perusal must soon prove to us, who read it divested by translation of all charms of diction and of rhythm; yet does it, after all, look like the production of a mere impostor? Möhler recognises in it 'a very 'original piety, a moving devotion, a thoroughly 'individual religious poetry, which cannot possibly 'be forced or artificial.' And how is it possible, he eloquently asks, that a religious fire, wild

<sup>1</sup> See Möhler, p. 370; Caussin (Preface); Irving; Carlyle, &c.

though it may have been, which in so astonishingly short a period set all Asia in flames, could go forth from one in whom the kindling material had no real existence? 'Many millions of men,' he continues with some change of metaphor, 'feed and foster from the Koran an estimable religious and moral life; and one cannot believe that they are drawing from an empty spring.'<sup>1</sup>

It is our earnest wish to expose with faithfulness, as we proceed, the grievous defects of the Mahometan creed, and the sins and short-comings, no less than the virtues of the leading races which have adopted it. But considering, for a moment, merely the amount of influence (apart from the further question, whether it has been for good or evil) which Islamism has exercised, we cannot but think us of any sheer impostor who has left such traces of his footsteps as has its founder. Zoroaster and Pythagoras may possibly be compared to Mahomet, in respect of the kind, if not the degree, of impression which they made. But unless it can be distinctly *proved* that they likewise were consciously deceivers, there is no room for reasoning from analogy from their cases to that of Mahomet, it being the very condition of this species of argument, '*ut incerta certis probet.*' And, in truth, with all respect to the memory of a pious and truly learned author, to whom students of ancient history are deeply beholden,<sup>2</sup> we are by no means convinced of the existence of imposture in the sages either of Bactria or of Samos.

We have said that we are not prepared to enter

<sup>1</sup> See Möhler, p. 370; Caussin (Preface); Irving; Carlyle, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Dean Prideaux, *Connexion*, &c. Part I. book iv.

at any length into the causes of Mahomet's success. In declining to investigate so important a branch of the subject, we may appear to be taking a leaf out of the writings of those Mahometan historians of Turkey, who, as M. Ubicini informs us,<sup>1</sup> refer everything to a Will above man, in such wise as to dispense with examination of the causes of events, or their probable results in the future. Such a mode of handling history is, indeed, neither Christian nor philosophic. Yet it may be allowable to suppose, that the contrary extreme is likewise evil; that the annalists and critics of the West, who seem almost to have adopted as their motto, the Virgilian—

‘Felix qui potuit *rerum cognoscere causas*,’

may likewise be sometimes leading us astray. The previous state of Arabia (of which we have been endeavouring to afford some idea;) the actual amount of truth which was taught by Mahomet; the principles acquired, directly or indirectly, from Christianity; the points of contact with the past, and with all the religions then obtaining in his country; the elegance and purity of the language of the Koran, and its applicability to law and the practical business of life; the native force of its author's mind, and the courage and confidence thence infused into his warriors; the evident need, if it may be said with reverence, of some great scourge upon idolatry; all these have been named as probable causes of the success of Mahometanism, and we are not prepared to assert that they did not, each and all, contribute to the great

<sup>1</sup> Page 239.



result. But that they form a complete and satisfactory explanation, we cannot, for our own part, pretend to feel: and if they accounted ever so completely for the first propagation of Islamism, they would still fail to reveal the secret of its extraordinary permanence and freedom from change; a point which, after all, as Gibbon observes, is more wonderful than even its first success. Rather should we be disposed to admit, in the somewhat quaint, but forceful language of Sir Francis Palgrave, 'That after all our cogitations, we are coerced to acknowledge that blessings and judgments are equally inscrutable: that many failures are unaccountable, and many successes inexplicable; legitimate expectations of good sorely disappointed—good resulting from evil—large promises and small forthcomings; or the hap and the halfpenny turning to ten thousand pounds.'<sup>1</sup>

We must not, however, pass in silence one reason which is usually alleged in our popular histories, and to which Gibbon has lent the sanction of his authority; that indulgence, namely, of voluptuousness, which Mahomet has permitted in this world, and promised in the next. Those who have thus far followed our line of reasoning, will not be surprised to find that we agree with Mr. Hallam and Mr. Maurice,<sup>2</sup> in thinking that the influence of this motive has been much exaggerated. There may indeed be much truth in an observation of Dr. Arnold's,<sup>3</sup> that 'the unworthy idea of Paradise in the Koran justifies the ways of God in not revealing [that is, we presume,

<sup>1</sup> History of Normandy and England, vol i. page 128.

<sup>2</sup> 'On the Religions of the World,' Lect. i. page 27.

<sup>3</sup> Life. Note to Appendix C.

‘fully and clearly revealing] ‘a future state earlier, ‘since man in early ages was not fit for it.’ But the unseen is with the mass of mankind so far less potent than the visible and tangible world around them, that it is probably to the licence of the present life, rather than to the anticipations of a future state, that Gibbon, and those who follow him, mainly refer. On this point we cannot do better than cite the remarks of Mr. Hallam.

‘Although the character of the founder of Mohammedism may have been tainted by sensuality as well as ferociousness, I do not think that he relied upon inducements of the former kind for the diffusion of his system. We are not to judge of this by rules of Christian purity or of European practice. If polygamy was a prevailing usage in Arabia, as is not questioned, its permission gave no additional licence to the proselytes of Mohammed, who will be found rather to have narrowed the unbounded liberty of oriental manners in this respect; while his decided condemnation of adultery and of incestuous connexions, so frequent among barbarous nations, does not argue a very base and accommodating morality. A devout Mussulman exhibits much more of the Stoical than the Epicurean character;<sup>1</sup> nor can any one read the Koran without being sensible that it breathes an austere and scrupulous spirit; and, in fact, the founder of a new religion or sect is little likely to obtain permanent success by indulging the vices and luxuries of mankind. I should rather be disposed to reckon the severity of Mohammed’s discipline among the causes of its influence.’<sup>2</sup>

The most recent researches certainly tend to confirm this view. Mr. Hallam mentions among the severe requirements of Mahometanism, the long fasting, the pilgrimages, the regular

<sup>1</sup> Compare M. Ubicini, in his somewhat too favourable estimate of the Turk (p. 497): ‘*Il y a en lui toute la force d’âme du Stoïcien, moins l’insensibilité.*’ We doubt the justice of the latter clause.

<sup>2</sup> Middle Ages, chap. vi. vol. ii. p. 114. Tenth Ed.

prayers and ablutions, and the abstinence from stimulating liquors. Yet these injunctions, great as is the self-denial they involved on the part of his first followers, who had been passionately fond of drink, and apparently not much shackled by any burden of ordinances, did not constitute the whole, perhaps not even the most trying portion of his demands. Besides the condemnation of the wicked practice of destroying female infants,<sup>1</sup> (which his precursor Zayd had so forcibly denounced,) Mahomet forbade all illicit intercourse, beyond the bounds of marriage or concubinage; all usury; all games of chance; all divinations by arrows; all hostilities between tribes which had once accepted the creed of Islam. Most of these are trying restraints upon the will of the natural man. Games of chance are everywhere popular, alike in Christendom and heathendom. Bourdaloue, in his very strict sermon *Sur les Divertissemens du Monde*, after cutting off the great majority of the worldly amusements of his audience, yet leaves them the liberty of play, provided the time be not unduly extended, nor duties neglected, nor the sums at stake excessive. The Arabs, as has been observed, were devoted to gambling, insomuch that men had been known to lose all that they possessed, and then to stake their freedom, forfeit it, and become slaves. Divinations have always been popular, (witness the success of fortune-tellers even in Europe,) and the particular mode of divining by arrows known by the name of *Kidâh* or *Arlâm*, had been practised in every emergency by the countrymen of Mahomet.<sup>2</sup> Yet how are these things treated in the Koran?

<sup>1</sup> Koran, xvi. 60, 61; Ubicini, pp. 502, 503.

<sup>2</sup> We have not space for a description of this mode of divination,

‘O true believers, surely wine, and lots, and images, and divining arrows, are an abomination of the work of Satan; therefore avoid them, that ye may prosper. Satan seeketh to sow dissension and hatred among you by means of wine and lots, and to divert you from remembering God and from prayer; will ye not, therefore, abstain from them? Obey God, and obey the apostle, and take heed to yourselves; but if ye turn back, know that the duty of an apostle is only to preach publicly.’<sup>1</sup>

These injunctions were enforced with a high hand, and although it be most true (as Mr. Hallam intimates) that strictness possesses a winning influence peculiarly its own, that numbers everywhere can sympathize with the sentiments of Dr. Johnson on this head, and the oft-recurring thought of our late Laureate, respecting ‘the weight of too much liberty,’ yet it is evident, that by many of the Arab tribes the restrictions were at first much felt as a very sensible diminution of their licence. Thus, for example, when El-Acha, a poet of very great celebrity, (and, like many of their poets, a keen satirist upon occasion,) had composed a panegyric upon Mahomet, and was journeying to present himself to the new teacher; certain hostile Koreishites, alarmed at the idea

but the following most characteristic story will give some idea of the kind of procedure:—The prince-poet, Imroulcays (of whose *Moallacat* or prize-poem we have given a specimen), was burning to avenge the murder of his father. He consulted an idol much revered by the Arabs, named Dhou-l-Kholosa. His pointless arrows were three in number, and bore the words *command*, *prohibition*, *delay*. He shook them together and drew out *prohibition*. Dissatisfied, he begins over again, and thrice following comes forth *prohibition*. Upon this he takes the arrows, breaks them, and throws the pieces at the idol’s head, exclaiming:—‘Wretch! if it were thy father who had been killed, thou wouldest not have forbidden his being avenged.’—*Caussin*, li. p. 310.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. v. 92, 93.

of such an accession to the cause they were opposing, bribed him with the splendid present of a hundred camels to desist from his intention. But they did not have recourse to this huge donative until they had first attempted, though in vain, to deter him by a prospect of the self-denial which the profession of Mahometanism would entail. 'Our compatriot,' said they (for Mahomet, as we have said, was of the tribe of the Koreish), 'will forbid you things of which you are extremely fond.' And they proceed to name the points above referred to, licentiousness, games of chance, usury, and wine. It was when these remonstrances proved futile, that their spokesman, Abou-Sofyân—but we will not here risk spoiling, by translation, the *naïveté* of M. Caussin's narrative:—'Abou-Sofyân dit alors aux Coraychites: "Si El-Acha se rend près de Mahomet et s'attache à lui, il enflammera par ses vers les Arabes contre nous. Donnons-lui cent chameaux pour lui fermer la bouche."'<sup>1</sup> El-Acha took the bribe, but was thrown and killed on his road homeward.

This event happened in A. D. 628. About two years later, the tribe of Bacrites bethought themselves of submission to the new creed. One consideration, however, restrained them: 'The religion of Abdelmottalib's grandson,' said they, 'forbids those who embrace it to make war upon each other; it pronounces sentence of death against the Mussulman who slays a Mussulman. We shall be obliged to give up attacks and pillage of those tribes who, like ourselves, have adopted Islamism.' At length they made a

<sup>1</sup> Tom. ii. pp. 402, 403.

compromise with their consciences. 'Let us make one more expedition against the Témim, and then we will declare ourselves Mussulmans.' Four days saw the Bacrites across the southern boundary of Irak, a space usually occupying eight days of travel; suddenly did they fall upon the Témim in the plain of Chaytayn, slaughtered numbers, and carried off their cattle. The injured Témim sent a deputation to the prophet, entreating from him a curse upon the authors of their calamity. But Mahomet declined; he knew of the disposition of the Bacrites, and had no desire to estrange them. Very shortly after, they were all among the number of his proselytes.

Now, although El-Acha was dissuaded by a bribe, and not by the dread of sacrifice of his inclinations, and although the schoolboy-like feeling of the Bacrites did not prevent them from ultimately becoming Mussulmans, yet, surely, in either narrative we may trace the conviction, that to adopt Mahometanism was esteemed a piece of self-denial, and not an acquirement of more licence, either of thought or action.

It remains that, in accordance with our promise, we attempt to describe the relation of Mahometanism to paganism and to Christianity. The latter branch of this inquiry ought to include, perhaps, some slight notice of the leading races (besides the Arabs) which have adopted it. But the accomplishment of such a task would carry us far beyond our present limits.

And firstly, then, as regards paganism. Writers of the most opposite schools of thought—we

may instance Mr. Forster and Dr. Newman<sup>1</sup>—concur in representing Mahometanism as a kind of half-way creed, if we may so speak, between paganism and Christianity; excellent in comparison with the religions of heathendom, execrable when confronted with the faith of Christ. Such portraiture of Islamism demands respect, from the mere circumstance of its having been drawn by learned men who have contemplated the subject from such different points of view. Neither do we purpose to deny that it is in the main correct; but inasmuch as it seems to us to need some modification, so far as regards paganism, we shall venture to draw out formally a sketch of the strong and weak points of Mahomet's teaching, when considered with reference to the heathen creeds. And as, in the prosecution of this portion of our task, we shall derive but little assistance from other writers, we must the more bespeak the indulgence of the reader for any mistakes into which we may fall, while, at the same time, we cannot complain if he should look more watchfully for their occurrence.

The three great errors of paganism are Epicurism, pantheism, and polytheistic idolatry. The doctrine of Epicurus may not indeed be directly and immediately responsible for the conduct of all who called themselves Epicureans; but it is hard to prove that their general behaviour did not logically flow from their master's tenets. When once a man has taught that the gods have enjoyed for ever a perfect happiness, undisturbed alike by

<sup>1</sup> Forster, 'Vindication of Mahometanism Unveiled,' p. 31; Newman, pp. 105, 106.

the trouble either of creating, or of governing the world, he is further removed from deism than even deism itself from true religion.<sup>1</sup> Between such doctrine and sheer atheism there is, *practically*, no real difference; the Lucretian doctrine, of a creation from a concourse of atoms, follows as truly as the Horatian carelessness and love of pleasure. The consistent Epicurist sees not God in the marvels of nature, nor seeks to influence him by prayers.

From miracles, be they genuine or feigned, he will turn away with supercilious contempt:—

‘Credat Judæus Apella,  
Non ego. Namque Deos didici securum agere ævum;  
Nec, si quid mihi faciat natura, Deos id  
Tristes ex alto cœli demittere tecto.’<sup>2</sup>

His comrades he will naturally exhort to imitate the Beings who are above them:—

‘To live and lie reclined  
On the hills like gods together, careless of mankind.  
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl’d  
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly  
curl’d  
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world;  
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,  
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps  
and fiery sands,  
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and  
praying hands.’<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dean Prideaux, in the Preface to his ‘Life of Mahomet,’ has spoken to this effect; but the statements of the text were first suggested to the writer by the MS. of a highly gifted friend.

<sup>2</sup> Horat. Sat. lib. i. vv. 100, 103.

<sup>3</sup> Tennyson, ‘Lotos-Eaters.’—The entire passage is as exact as it is poetical.



Most justly (polytheism apart) did Cicero, in opposition to this heartless, hopeless creed, maintain with the Stoics the existence of a particular, as well as a general, Providence in the government of the universe: 'Stabit illud quidem . . . .  
'de quo agimus, Esse Deos, et eorum providentiâ  
'mundum administrari, eosdemque consulere rebus  
'humanis, nec solum universis, verum etiam  
'singulis.'<sup>1</sup>

The pantheist, too, if he carry out his doctrines to their legitimate conclusions, (as is done by the Hindoos,) may easily bring himself to believe that the eternal and immutable distinction between right and wrong is a delusion, however necessary for our guidance in this life. For by deifying nature, and thus confusing the Creator and the created, he makes the Almighty to be all things, and each individual soul a part of the *Anima Mundi*, the one great soul of the universe. Thus every act of man becomes an act of the Divinity; and as the Deity cannot do wrong, so neither, properly speaking, can man. Unpardonable as is this self-deification in those who have been nurtured in Christian lands, it yet possessed a winning aspect for very pure and lofty minds among the ancients,<sup>2</sup> as a reaction from the grossness of the popular belief. With them pantheism was often

<sup>1</sup> De Divinatione, lib. i. cap. 50. § 117.—Cf. De Natura Deorum, lib. ii. of which a large part is occupied in establishing this position. 'Nec vero universo generi hominum solum, sed etiam singulis à Diis immortalibus consuli et provideri solet. Licet enim contrahere universitatem generis humani, eamque gradatim ad pauciores, postremò deducere ad singulos.' (Cap. 65. § 164.)

<sup>2</sup> For instance, Virgil. Georg. iv. 219—227: *Æneid*, vi. 724—729.

perhaps the expression of a dim groping after two great truths; the one, that in Him who made us 'we live, and move, and have our being;' the other, that men's highest bliss must consist in becoming 'partakers of the Divine nature.' But its teachers erred grievously, in that they denied the existence of a personal God, and reduced their Creator to a mere philosophic abstraction; they erred grievously, in that they made union with Him to be of such sort, as that man should become *of one substance* with the Eternal, and lose his own individuality by being absorbed into the Divine essence.

But even worse, perhaps, fared those who added 'drunkenness to thirst,'<sup>1</sup> (if we may adopt Bishop Andrews's explanation of those words,) by taking refuge from atheism in polytheism, and the worship of images. The close connexion between polytheism and idolatry has been commented upon by S. Athanasius<sup>2</sup> and S. Austin.<sup>3</sup> There were no images in any country until religion became corrupted; Varro admitted that the Romans had for more than a hundred and seventy years worshipped the gods without an image: Plutarch (and, we believe, Pliny) bear witness to the same effect.<sup>4</sup> 'And if this had endured till

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxix. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Cont. Arian. iii. 8.

<sup>3</sup> De Civ. Dei. lib. v. cap. 81.

<sup>4</sup> A very learned writer (Morris, 'Essay towards Conversion of Hindus,' p. 226) supplies the following list: Herod. i. 131 of the Persians, and iv. 59 of the Scythians; Tacitus, Germ. cap. ix. of the ancient Germans; Eusebius, Præp. Evang. pp. 274, 275 of the ancient Seres and Brahmans; Windischmann of the Chinese (p. 348); and Rubbi (xi. p. 171) of the native Americans. The same writer is full of information upon Brahmanism and idolatry.

now,' adds Varro, 'the gods would have been more purely served.'<sup>1</sup> Not only is idolatry most offensive to Him who is a jealous God, in that it gives His glory to another, but likewise because it appears to have the power of putting men into connexion with the unseen world, and establishing a fellowship with evil spirits; in which, perhaps, the essence of its exceeding sinfulness may lie. 'They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they Him to anger. *They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.*' *'They sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,* and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, *whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan.*' 'Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything. But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, *they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils,*' (οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι.)<sup>2</sup>

Now against all three of these capital errors; against Epicurean or pantheistic notions of the Deity, and, still more vigorously, against idolatry, Mahometanism utters and enacts a most direct, a most energetic, and, on the whole, a most success-

<sup>1</sup> 'Quod si adhuc mansisset, castius dii observarentur.'—Varro, cit. ap. S. Aug. de Civ. Dei. v. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxii. 16, 17; Ps. cvi. 37, 38; 1 Cor. x. 18—20; Cf. verse 21; also Levit. xvii. 7; 2 Chron. xi. 15; Rev. ix. 20; and Ps. xcv. 5, as in the Septuagint.

ful protest. We say upon the whole, for it is not to be denied that the creed of the Schiite Mussulmans has admitted a pantheistic element, the mystic theology commonly known by the name of Soffeeism. This arose from the influence of the Persian mind after the conquest of that country by the Moslems: and hence Soffeeism has found its way into Turkish as well as Persian poetry, as most of the poets of these countries belong to some order of Dervishes,<sup>1</sup> and these devotees are the supporters, as indeed they were the originators, of this intrusive element. But although there has hence arisen a dangerous species of mysticism, we see no reason to believe that the disciples of Mahomet have, in the slightest degree, yielded to the temptation of disbelieving in the personality of the Almighty. And, assuredly, the God of the Koran is no Epicurean deity; so completely is all that is done in the universe regarded as His work and will, that even the research into secondary causes is, as we have observed, almost abjured. And, lastly, as regards idolatry, it has been seen, in that affecting history of Zayd the son of Amr, how he forbade men to eat the flesh of victims which had been sacrificed to idols, an injunction displaying a spiritual instinct so deep and true, as to incline us to think, that had his life been spared, he might have become a Christian like his three companions. And though Mahomet may have been in character inferior to his precursor, yet the progress of

<sup>1</sup> Taylor's Hist. of Mohammedanism, p. 307. See also the brief, but valuable account of Persian literature by Mr. E. B. Cowell in the Oxford Essays for 1855, which appeared shortly after the publication of this article.

himself and his followers in the destruction of idol shrines, is undoubtedly the most grand and striking feature of their history. Never was Mahomet greater than on that memorable day, when he rode on his camel seven times around the Caba, and had the three hundred and sixty idols overthrown and crushed beneath his feet, saying, 'The truth has come, let falsehood disappear.'<sup>1</sup> Never were the Mahometan conquerors so thoroughly the instruments of the righteous vengeance of God, as when in Hindostan they disregarded all difficulties of country, of climate, of weather, all multitudes of enemies, all hostile appliances of war, the elephant, and the armed vessel, and the walled fortress, all bribes, however fabulous in amount, so that they might utterly demolish those idolatrous temples, which had in every way become the haunts of diabolical wickedness. And, truly, obedience to the law of their creed proved, at the same time, the best earthly policy. Most readers of the history of India must have been struck with that incident in the life of Mahmood, when for a moment he paused in the infamous shrine at Somnaut, and gave ear to the enormous offer of the Brahmins, who would fain have saved its idol from the common doom; but then, recovering himself, proceeded in his work of destruction, and was repaid, not merely by the approval of his conscience, but by the magnificent outpouring, from the interior of the shattered image, of diamonds, and pearls, and rubies, beyond number.

But over and above these protests against

<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. iii. p. 280.

errors, Mahometanism teaches many things clearly, which paganism of every kind had, in a greater or less degree, lost, or at best, was teaching vaguely. Eternity and a judgment to come, fixed dogmas, fixed rules of right and wrong, the existence of real revelations; these, and other truths, did the Arabian gain from Judaism and from Christianity. One other point we venture to mention, because we have not seen it named by any writer upon the subject of Mahometanism, namely, that Mahomet appears to have taught a reasonable doctrine of penance. The idea of penance is, indeed, very deeply seated in the human heart; it is a great mistake to imagine, that the rejection of distinctively Roman teaching on this head involves the rejection of *all* doctrine concerning it. On the contrary, that very important rule of S. Gregory, 'to cut off indulgence in things lawful, where we know that we have committed what is unlawful, may be illustrated and enforced, not only from the Prayer-book and Homilies of the English Church, but likewise from writings whence it might be least expected; from the poetry of the Puritan Spenser, and from the treatises of Bishop Burnet and of Calvin.

'Since we ought,' (says the last named, commenting upon the very important word *revenge* in 2 Cor. vii. 11;) 'since we ought to do vengeance upon sins wherever they exist, nor that alone, *but more particularly to begin with ourselves*; the saying of the apostle has a wider range, for he is speaking of the signs of penitence. This one is conspicuous among the rest, since, by punishing our sins, we in some wise anticipate the judgment of God. As he elsewhere teacheth, "If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged," of the Lord. Not, however, that it is to be hence inferred, that men, by exacting punishment of themselves, can compensate

for punishment due to God, so as to redeem themselves from His hand. But thus the matter stands, since it is the design of God, by chastening us, to destroy our heedless security, so that, warned of His wrath, we should henceforth take heed to ourselves: *when the sinner himself previously taketh spontaneous revenge, he does away the need for such an admonition of God.*<sup>1</sup>

An illustration of the Mahometan doctrine on this point will be found, (if so abrupt a descent from Comments upon Holy Scripture may be pardoned,) in that portion of 'The Thousand and One Nights,' which contains the adventures of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid.

'At the foot of the bridge they met with an old blind man, who asked for their alms; the Caliph turned, and put a piece of gold into his hand. The blind man presently caught hold of his hand and stopped him. "Charitable person," said he, "whoever you are, that God hath inspired to bestow His alms, do not refuse the favour that I ask you, to give me a box on the ear, for I deserve this and a greater punishment." After these words he let the Caliph's hand go, that he might strike; but for fear that he should not, held him fast by his clothes.'

When the man has told his story (which the reader can refer to in any of the old editions—

<sup>1</sup> 'Cæterùm quia peccata debemus *ulcisci* ubicunque sint; neque id modò, sed à nobis potissimum incipere: latius patet quod dicit apostolus: loquitur enim de signis pænitentiae. Hoc unum est insigne inter reliqua; dum peccata vindicando, Dei judicium quodammodo antevertimus. Quemadmodum alibi docet, Si nos judicaremus, non judicaremur utique à Domino. Neque tamen hinc colligendum est, homines vindictam à se exigendo, compensare pœnas Deo debitas, ut ab ejus manû se redimant. Sed ita se res habet, Quum Dei consilium sit, nos castigando, securitatem nobis excutere, ut de irâ ejus commonefacti, caveamus nobis in posterum: quum spontaneam ultionem peccator ipse præoccupat, facit ut tali Dei admonitione non sit opus.'—Calvinus, in loc. cit.

for it is not given, we believe, in Mr. Lane's version),<sup>1</sup>

'The Caliph said, Baba Abdallah, thy sin is great; but God be praised! thou knowest both the enormity of that, and thy penance. As for thy first, thou must ask God's pardon for it in every prayer thy religion obliges thee to say every day.'

Now it is true that such ideas, though very hard, we imagine, to discover in Greek or Roman writers, were common in the East, and have, in many parts of Asia, been developed into very terrible and superstitious practices. But Mahometanism, if we mistake not, is utterly opposed to any Hindoo notion of abstract merit in penance, apart from religious sentiments in the heart of the doer of the penance (the doctrine so vividly portrayed in Southey's 'Curse of Kehama'); even Mahomet himself is held to have been accepted into Paradise by divine mercy alone, and not for any presumed good deeds; and the Koran, while it implies that one who has acted wrongfully cannot by mere regret, and by undoing (where it is possible) his actions, be restored at once to his former position, yet enjoins a kind of self-denial which may often prove beneficial to others, besides the offender himself. Thus, for instance, it was easy for an Arab, in a moment of vexation, to repeat the short *formula* which divorced a wife: it was easy to repent of such a step: but the book of the Moslems does not allow of a simple renovation of the tie. The man must pay a penalty for his fault.

<sup>1</sup> This does not affect, we believe, its value for our purpose, though we cannot stop to give the grounds of our opinion.



‘Those who divorce their wives, by declaring that they will for the future regard them as their mothers, and afterwards would repair what they have done, shall be obliged to free a captive, before they are re-united. This is what ye are warned to perform : and God is well apprized of that which ye do : and whoso findeth not a captive to redeem, shall observe a fast of two consecutive months. And whoso shall not be able to fast that time, shall feed threescore poor men. This is ordained you, that ye may believe in God and His apostle.’<sup>1</sup>

Another very important feature in the creed of Islam, is the sense of brotherhood with which it is calculated to inspire those who profess it. With the one exception of the ruler, Caliph or Sultan, all Mahometans are equal : difference of social position may indeed result from wealth, and from the possession of civil or military office ; but such difference is not hereditary, and may at any moment be utterly reversed by change of circumstances, or the *fiat* of a despotic ruler. Such notions are strangely opposed to the extremely haughty and aristocratic feelings of the ancient Arab tribes. The change, however, does not appear to be accidental, but to have been deliberately contemplated by Mahomet. ‘Koreishites,’ said he, on the day when he destroyed the idols at Mecca, ‘no more pagan arrogance, no more pride built upon ancestry ! All men are children of Adam, and Adam was formed out of the dust.’ And he recited a verse out of the Koran. ‘O men, verily we have created you of a male and a female, and we have distributed you into families and tribes. The common object of your existence is a brotherly society. The most honourable in the

<sup>1</sup> Koran, chap. lviii. sub. init.

'eyes of God is he who fears Him most. To 'God belongeth wisdom and knowledge infinite.'<sup>1</sup> Moreover, every Moslem, of whatever race, or wherever he dwells, is considered by the mere profession of Islamism to have been symbolically grafted into the Arabian race, and when he prays with his face towards Mecca, to be united in the sanctuary of the common stock.<sup>2</sup> Such teaching we may allow with Möhler to be in advance of Judaism, since it is reflected from the light of that Faith for which Judaism was but the preparation. Certainly it is no mere theory, but a living idea, which has exercised great influence upon the Tartar races. An intelligent and observant traveller, Lieutenant Wood,<sup>3</sup> virtually ascribes to this, and some other tenets of Islamism, the apparently innate self-respect and gravity, even of the poorest Mahometans; and, if we remember rightly, M. Huc declares that the Chinese dare not treat with injustice Mahometan residents of the Celestial Empire; because it is well known, that, though comparatively few, they have a common bond, both social and spiritual, and that any ill-treatment of one would be taken up as a common wrong by all.

This idea of spiritual filiation is indeed a truly noble one. The degree of success which has attended, or can attend, the attempt to offer Islamism to every race, and again, the amount of connexion between this creed and the intellectual development of humanity, open questions far less

<sup>1</sup> Caussin, tom. iii. pp. 231, 232. Koran, chap. xlix. 13. We have here followed the version of M. Caussin, which slightly, but not substantially, differs from that of Sale.

<sup>2</sup> Möhler, p. 393.

<sup>3</sup> Cited by Dr. Newman, pp. 86, 87.

favourable to Mahomet and his work than the points on which we have now been dwelling. But let us not shrink from allowing it its full due. On the one hand the Marabout, as a Mahometan priest is called in Africa, teaches to the degraded children of Ham reading and writing, along with the belief in Eternity, and in a living, almighty, all-wise and good God, and produces a marked and sensible improvement, insomuch that the traveller would always choose, if possible, for a place of rest a village where a Marabout is living:<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, the courts of Bagdad and of Cordova undoubtedly patronised the labours of the intellect, and the throne was surrounded by multifarious, if not very original, science and learning. ‘You only sent for a barber,’ says the persecuting chatterbox in the tale, ‘but here in my person ‘you have the best barber in Bagdad; an experienced physician; a very profound chemist; ‘an infallible astrologer; a finished grammarian; ‘a complete orator; a subtle logician; a mathematician perfectly well versed in geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and all the divisions of algebra; ‘an historian fully master of the histories of the ‘kingdoms of the universe: besides, I know all ‘parts of philosophy; I have all the traditions ‘upon my fingers’ ends. I am a poet, I am an ‘architect; nay, what is it I am not? there is ‘nothing in nature hidden from me.’<sup>2</sup> In some of these branches of knowledge, Europe is certainly under obligation to the *Saracens*, as the Arabs got named in the West. The nine numerals were brought into Europe by them, and effected a per-

<sup>1</sup> Möhler, p. 386.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Thousand and One Nights.’—Story told by the Tailor.

fect revolution in arithmetic. Algebra was at least made known to us through them, so far as to preserve its Arab name; and Alchemy, which, however futile in itself, proved a most useful hand-maid to real chemistry, betrays a similar derivation.<sup>1</sup> We have alluded to the star Aldebaran, as retaining its Arabian appellation; it may be added, that a very large proportion of stars in the great constellations have done the same, thus bearing testimony to the Saracenic cultivation of Astronomy. Such are Antares in Scorpio, Algenib in Perseus; Rastaber in Draco, and numbers more. We hear on all sides of their commentaries upon Aristotle: even Dante does not refuse to name

‘Averroes, che il gran commento feo;’<sup>2</sup>

and Sismondi thinks that their poets exercised considerable influence upon the taste and genius of the Troubadours.<sup>3</sup> Mahometan literature is, however, too large a subject to receive anything like justice at our hands, though we must add a word or two hereafter respecting one of its leading features. One more of the qualifications claimed by the barber, we must just allude to, we mean the architectural skill of the Saracens. The Turks have not, we believe, produced anything in this respect worthy of admiration; on the contrary, their buildings are said to be heavy, badly proportioned, and destitute of genius. But it was far otherwise with the first promulgators of Islamism. They had a style which was really their own, and

<sup>1</sup> Chambers's Cyclopaedia, articles *Algebra* and *Alchemy*.

<sup>2</sup> *Inferno*, iv. 144.

<sup>3</sup> *De la Littérature du Midi de l'Europe*, tom. i. chap. iii.

sprang out of their creed. 'The architecture of 'the Arabs,' says Mr. Owen Jones,<sup>1</sup> 'is essentially 'religious, and the offspring of the Koran, as 'Gothic architecture is of the Bible. The prohibition to represent animal life, caused them to 'seek for other means of decoration ; inscriptions 'from the Koran, interwoven with geometrical 'ornaments and flowers, not drawn decidedly from 'nature, but translated through the loom ; for it 'would seem that the Arabs, in changing their 'wandering for a settled life, in striking the tent 'to plant it in a form more solid, had transferred 'the luxurious shawls and hangings of Cashmere, 'which had adorned their former dwellings, to 'their new, changing the tent pole for a marble 'column, and the silken tissue for gilded plaster.' Mr. Ford observes, that it might have been added, that the palm-tree was the type of the columns which they used in their court-yards (*patios*). How brilliant was their success, we know, not merely from records, but from actual remains. Even now, when the spirit of the nineteenth century would fain collect in its Crystal Palace the finest specimens of the art of the most varied climes and ages, it is compelled to devote a chamber to the reproduction of one of the courts of the exquisite Alhambra !

But with all these features of superiority, there still remain points wherein, as it seems to us, Mahometanism is decidedly inferior to some of the other false religions of the world. We mean that there are certain needs in human nature which the creed of Islam does not satisfy, and which other

<sup>1</sup> Cited in Mr. Ford's 'Handbook for Spain,' sec. iii. p. 372.

religions have at least attempted to satisfy. Writers who are anxious, as we are, to do justice to the merits of the Arab-born creed, but too often, we think, ignore this side of the question.<sup>1</sup> It is not touched upon in any of the works which are named at the commencement of this article. And yet, unless it be duly taken into account, we shall surely obtain an imperfect, and perhaps an unduly favourable, estimate of Mahometanism.

Let it be granted, that the religions against which the Moslem hosts prevailed, had become exceedingly corrupt; and that it was not merely the power of the sword which laid them low: let it be granted, that there is a salt in Islamism, which has hitherto preserved it (at least in theory, and perhaps partially in practice) from a like corruption, from a like departure from its own original principles: still these religions found food for some cravings of the human mind, which were, in themselves, neither wrong or unnatural. Thus, for example, it is natural, and it is right, to imagine that the Divine nature must in itself, and much more when viewed by our finite comprehension, be full of mystery; it is natural to seek for something which shall bridge over the vast gulf between the human and the Divine, the Creator and the created; it is, above all, natural to seek to propitiate the Almighty by offering sacrifice, and by thus softening the otherwise appalling notion of Almighty power, as a thing before which man must simply prostrate himself, to associate the performance of duties with soothing rites, and temper fear with love. How fully Christianity

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Maurice is an exception.—*Religions of the World*, p. 56, et alibi.

supplies all these needs ; how clearly it proclaims that, as there is a mystery of iniquity, so likewise is there a mystery of godliness ; how thoroughly the doctrine of the One Mediation and the One Sacrifice, from which all other sacrifices derive their worth and meaning, is its central verity, we have already hinted, and must not, for the moment, pause to enlarge upon ; but it is important to observe, that Magianism and the better forms of Buddhism, and even classic paganism, possessed something in these respects which Mahometanism has not. Magianism, though it had done its work when Mahomet appeared, and lost its pristine excellence, had probably been of real service in preparing the way for Christianity. That noble nation, whose religion it was, has the glory of numbering among its monarchs the one great heathen type of Christ our Lord ; Cyrus, the destroyer of Babylon, the restorer of the chosen race to their home in Palestine. Thinkers, so differently trained as Keble, Hengstenberg, and M. Nicolas, agree in extolling both Persia and its creed, as among the best and fairest specimens of heathendom.<sup>1</sup> A triad of deities, one eternal and two created and visible, of whom one fulfilled the office of Mediator ; the immortality of the soul ; the fall of the first man ; the life to come, its bliss and punishment ; resurrection of body and soul, and the three degrees of purity—purity of thought, of word, and of action ; these doctrines are all claimed

<sup>1</sup> 'Ne . . . nobili persarum genti, quam proximè à suis Hebræis caram fortasse habuit Divina Majestas, iniquiores esse videamur.' Keble, *Prælect Acad.* [tom. ii. p. 819] ; Cf. Hengstenberg : *Preface to Christology of the Old Testament*. M. Nicolas, *Études Philosophiques sur le Christianisme*, tom. ii.

for the religious system of the Persians by a learned living writer;<sup>1</sup> though the teaching may probably have been somewhat vague and dim, and was evidently mixed up with much that was erroneous. Hence, we cannot but suspect, the strength of the Schiite schism among the believers in Islamism; the mere question whether the three first Caliphs were usurpers or not, and whether Ali ought not to have immediately succeeded Mahomet, could hardly have led to such serious and lasting results. But an admixture of the idea of mediation, of union of the divine and human in one nature, and of other ancient Persian tenets, would at once give a subjective basis to a schism which was, at its commencement, rather personal and political, than religious.<sup>2</sup>

Take again the case of Buddhism. We are not about to defend its morality or its theology; though M. Huc's account of the Thibetians should certainly be weighed in the balance as well as the unfavourable portrait which others give of the Hindoo and Cingalese professors of this creed. In any case, Buddhism now possesses some deep and holy truths, however acquired. And so likewise, does Brahmanism. We have before us,

<sup>1</sup> M. Felix Lajard, *Lettre sur les Traditions Assyriennes et Persanes*, appended to the second volume of M. Nicolas' *Etudes Philosophiques*.

<sup>2</sup> Taylor's 'History of Mohammedanism' (chap. vii.) quite justifies us in taking this view of the Schiites, and thereby regarding the Sonnites as the truer Mussulmans. It is a sad blemish on this work, which is replete with curious and useful information, that its author commits the unpardonable error of asserting, more than once, that Mahomet taught the doctrine of the incarnation (p. 7, and p. 46). The Koran is *as explicit as possible* in denying the divinity of our Lord, though it admits His miraculous conception.



while we write, Wilkin's translation of that very curious Sanscrit work, the '*Bhagvat-Geeta*,' which contains the system of those worshippers of Kreesna, called the *Bluktahs*. A note, furnished by the present Bishop of Brechin, to Archdeacon Grant's most interesting Bampton Lectures, invites our attention to the following passage, as hinting at the Christian doctrines of remission of sin and the effects of faith, and of man's union with the Object of all true worship :—

'Those who serve me with adoration, I am in them, and they in me. If one, whose ways are ever so evil, serve me alone, he is as respectable as the just man; he is altogether well employed; he soon becometh of a virtuous spirit, and obtaineth eternal happiness. Recollect, O son of Koöntēē, that my servant doth not perish.'<sup>1</sup>

Now, as the work whence this extract is taken is of the tenth century, and consequently coeval with the Mahometan conquest of Hindoostan, it may easily be conceived that men, who could imbibe such sentiments, would regard Islamism with little favour. And thus indeed it proved: Mahomet's disciples smote Indian idolatry, and that most righteously; but forasmuch as their creed, in its bare and rigid Monotheism, did not correspond to the needs of the mystic and contemplative Hindoo, even the sword of Mahmood failed in the long run, to win the convictions of the mass of the inhabitants.

And with respect to rites of sacrifice: sad and

<sup>1</sup> *Bhagvat-Geeta*, lect. ix. In the same chapter occur the following striking words:—'I am the sacrifice; I am the worship; I am the spices; I am the invocation; I am the ceremony to the manes of the ancestors; I am the provisions; I am the fire and I am the victim.'—Krēeshna is the speaker throughout.

shocking as it was that an offering like that of Abel should have been transferred from the true and living God to his rebellious creatures, the fallen angels; yet in the existence of the rite itself, and the many points of agreement in its mode of performance by all nations, how much of deep and solemn truth was involved; truth, assuredly, which needed to be purified and disentangled from masses of superstition, but not to be lost sight of and forgotten. In the selection of a victim as innocent as possible, and likewise one *near humanity* (tamed animals, as the sheep or the calf—never wild ones, as the boar or wolf, being employed), in the infliction of a blood-shedding death, the knife, not the strangling cord, being the instrument; in the consumption of part of the victim by fire, and the rest by the ministrants and the people; in all these leading features the nations of the universe were at one. All recognised thereby, however dimly and unconsciously, man's need of that Atonement which, in the divine counsels of God the Holy Trinity, was offered 'before the foundation of the world;' all admitted that repentance alone could not avail to blot out sins; all entreated the acceptance of a substitute for their guilty selves:—

'Cor pro corde, precor, pro fibris sumite fibras:

*Hanc animam vobis pro meliore damus.'*<sup>1</sup> X  
I

That Mahomet should either continue the

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Fasti*, vi. 161, 2.—These striking lines are quoted by M. Nicolas, from whose chapter on sacrifices we have drawn largely. '*Etudes Philosophiques*,' livre ii. chap. iv. Though the Buddhists have no sacrifices, they do not leave the gulf between man and his Maker which Mahometanism does.

abolished sacrifices but he has relegated them to  
a very 92 obscure and MAHOMETANISM, unimportant place  
in his system.

sacrifices of blood, or failing that, should have grasped the idea of spiritual and bloodless sacrifices, was not perhaps to be expected. But in that his doctrine concerning the Godhead stands, as it were, bare and lonely; in that the interval between man and his Maker is left in all its vastness; in that with the loss of sacrifices, he lost much solemn truth conveyed in such ritual; he has thereby framed a religion devoid of some things, which the better among the heathen had retained; and thus far justified the pointed comment of Schlegel upon himself and his work, as the spectacle of *'a prophet without miracles—a faith without mysteries, and a morality without love.'*

These words of Schlegel bring us naturally to another branch of our subject, the relation, namely, between Mahometanism and the Gospel. In attempting to investigate this problem, it is only fair to ask what ideas Mahomet himself has promulgated upon so very important a point. We may then add some comments of our own upon any real features of resemblance, as well as of contrast.

Now the first remark to be made is, that the Koran is inconsistent on this head. Not, indeed, that this is a solitary instance of its inconsistency; for the Mussulmans, according to M. Renan, recognise 225 contradictions in the Koran<sup>1</sup>—that is to say, 225 passages, which were abrogated by its author as a consequence of some change in policy. But the inconsistency is, in this case, unusually striking and important. In one set of

<sup>1</sup> Möhler, p. 351.

passages Christianity is recognised as equally good with Mahometanism; in another it is merely a preparation for it, as Judaism had been for Christianity.

The mere fact of any view, however self-contradictory, being thus put forth, shows that Mahomet was compelled to recognize the existence both of Judaism and Christianity. He could not ignore them, as a Hindoo teacher might have done: the adherents of both creeds in Arabia were too numerous and too influential to admit of such a course. But, in truth, he had no such desire; the recognition of these religions in some way was compulsory upon Mahomet, quite as much from inward convictions, as from any force of external circumstances. No uninspired teacher ever seems to have felt more deeply the impossibility of grafting a religion upon his own subjective notions merely; none sought more anxiously to win for his doctrines an objective and historical basis.<sup>1</sup> In asserting that he came to restore the religion of that great Patriarch, the Father of the Faithful, he at once appealed to associations admitted to be most sacred both by Jew and Christian, and revered by numbers more, even of his idolatrous countrymen, with that honour paid everywhere, but most especially in the East, to the memory of a founder of a race:—

‘ Abraham was a model of true religion, obedient unto God, orthodox, and was not an idolater: he was also grateful for his benefits; wherefore God chose him and directed him into the right way. And we bestowed on him good in this world: and in the next he shall surely be one of the

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<sup>1</sup> Möhler.

righteous. We have also spoken unto thee, O Mohammed, by revelation, saying, Follow the religion of Abraham, who was orthodox, and was no idolater.'<sup>1</sup>

And although there is real difficulty in ascertaining the precise amount of knowledge of the Bible which Mahomet possessed, inasmuch as apocryphal gospels, and all imaginable forms of heresy concerning the nature of our Lord, were rife around him, yet it seems certain that, either in the course of his travels, or from intercourse with his wife's cousin, Waraca, the most learned Arab of his time, he had gained at least a general idea of Scripture history, and the true Gospels and the Talmud.<sup>2</sup> Some men there are who have influenced their own generation and posterity, who stand single and apart in history. Such in the world of politics are Julius Cæsar and Napoleon Buonaparte: such in the world of philosophy are Pythagoras and Socrates. On the other hand, Augustus could hardly have had a career, so far as we can judge, without the prior work of his great relative: the present Emperor of the French (he would be the first to acknowledge it), whatever powers he may have displayed, has yet no political existence apart from that of his uncle. In like manner, the Alexandrian school of Greek philosophy is as nothing without Socrates and Plato to fall back upon: and so, too, in the far

<sup>1</sup> Koran, chap. xvi. 120—123.

<sup>2</sup> Caussin, tom. i. p. 353.—It seems to us quite possible, as Mr. Hallam and Mr. Taylor think, that Mahomet had never actually read any part of the New Testament. Indeed, as M. Caussin remarks, '*Il est douteux qu'il sut lire et écrire.*' Such ignorance is of course quite compatible with a general, however imperfect, knowledge of Christian doctrine.

more solemn matter of distinctly religious teaching, it may be said that, apart from the revelations of God's true messengers, neither Mahomet nor his book have any being. 'Without Moses and the prophets and Christ, Mahomet is simply inconceivable:'<sup>1</sup> without the Old and New Testament, the Koran could never have been imagined.

Pascal<sup>2</sup> demands, concerning Mahomet, what mystery he revealed, what miracles he worked? To these queries the Mussulman can give no satisfactory reply. That the greatest of all prophets should teach nothing, which had not been known, even in patriarchal ages, is an admission surely ruinous to his claims. And the demands of his Arabian opponents, sarcastic as was their tone, do not appear in themselves unreasonable.<sup>3</sup>

'Since thou dost not approve our proposals, and persistest in declaring thyself sent by Allah, give us some evident proofs of thy claim. Our valley is narrow and barren; prevail on God to enlarge it, to remove further apart these mountain chains which inclose it; to send into it rivers, like those of Syria and Irak, or to raise from their graves some of our ancestors, and amongst them Cossay, son of Kilâb, whose word had such weight; let these illustrious dead acknowledge thee for a prophet, and we will acknowledge thee also.

\* \* \* \* \*

At least, resumed they, ask thy Lord to cause one of his angels to appear to bear witness to thy truth, and command us to believe in thee. Ask Him, too, to show openly the choice He has made of thee, by relieving thee from the

<sup>1</sup> 'Ohne Moses die Propheten und Christus ist Mahommed undenkbar' (Möhler, p. 353), for, as he adds, 'der wesentliche Inhalt des Coran ganz dem alten und neue Testamente entnommen ist.'

<sup>2</sup> *Pensées*, Seconde Partie, art. xii. § vii.

<sup>3</sup> Caussin, tome i. p. 378.

necessity of seeking thy daily subsistence in the markets, like the humblest of thy fellow-countrymen.'

The spirited replies of Mahomet to such remarks,<sup>1</sup> though fairly enough appealed to as evidence of his sincerity, yet leave the difficulty untouched. If he claimed only to be a restorer of forgotten faith, still God had never left even the restorer of Judaism, Elias, without the witness of miracles, any more than its founder, Moses. It must have been, in part, the sense of this deficiency, which has led the Persian and Turkish annalists to embellish the narrative of the false prophet's life with so much fable. Nor could Mahomet himself, though he frequently said that the composition of the Koran was his only miracle, preserve entire consistency in this respect. The famous nocturnal journey to heaven, known as *Isra*, though regarded by the more judicious of his followers as a vision, was yet announced by himself as matter of fact. It brought on him a perfect storm of ridicule, and led many to renounce him and his creed. Pascal, however, likewise asks, with no less reason, whether this latest of prophets had himself been foretold: '*Ce prophète, qui devait être la dernière attente du monde, a-t-il été prédit?*' Now seeing that, as Bishop Butler observes, miracles and prophecy are the proper proofs of a reve-

<sup>1</sup> 'God,' rejoined Mahomet, 'has not sent me to you for this. He has sent me solely to preach His law. I fulfil my mission, and I repeat,—If you accept that which I bring you, it will be your happiness in this world and in the next. If you reject my advice, God will judge us.' (Caussin, *ibid.*) Cf. Koran, chap. xxv. ad init. which is equally straightforward and vigorous; indeed, Mahomet's arguments with his countrymen seem to display a thorough belief, mistaken though it was, in his own mission.

lation, the absence of miracles seems to increase the need of prophecy. And of this, too, Mahomet was evidently conscious, though Pascal does not seem to have been aware of the circumstance. He accused both Jews and Christians of having falsified their sacred books, by expunging passages bearing reference to his appearance.<sup>1</sup> His disciples did not, however, allow that this work had been so thoroughly effected as to leave *no* Scriptural testimony in favour of their prophet, and maintained that certain texts of either Testament distinctly pointed out his advent. One of these, which is well known, is too painful to dwell upon; we mean the blasphemous (we believe, the quite unconsciously blasphemous) interpretation of S. John, xvi. 7; where the followers of Mahomet, as those of Manes had done in an earlier age, understood the Paraclete to mean their new teacher. That Mahomet himself was under some extraordinary misapprehension in this respect seems tolerably clear from the following words of the Koran:—

‘Jesus, the son of Mary, said, “O children of Israel, verily I am the apostle of God sent unto you, confirming the law which was delivered before me, and bringing good-tidings of an apostle who shall come after me, and whose name shall be Ahmed.” [Ahmed being, as Sale remarks, another form of Mohammed.]’<sup>2</sup>

The Persian paraphrast attempts to support this passage by reference to the above-mentioned text of S. John.<sup>3</sup> Another text of these Moslem doctors, is Psalm l. 2, where, with the aid of the Syriac, they try to wrest the words ‘perfection of

<sup>1</sup> Möhler. Cf. Sale, Notes to Koran, chap. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Koran, chap. lxi.

<sup>3</sup> Sale, *in loc.*



beauty' into meaning the 'crown of Mahomet.' In a third very curious instance, they would fain lay hold upon that connexion of mountains with religion, which is so frequent among all nations,<sup>1</sup> and which divine inspiration has condescended, if we may so speak, to ratify; as will be admitted by any Christian, who thinks for one moment on the ideas associated in his mind with the names of Mount Sinai, Mount Tabor, and Mount Calvary. If, then, we can grant to the Mahometans that Mount Seir is a mountain in Galilee, or near Jerusalem, instead of being in Idumea; and that Mount Paran means the hills round Mecca, instead of that mountain in Arabia Petræa, near which Moses began to deliver his law, and which is distant from Mecca some 500 miles; then, but not otherwise, can they appeal with success, to the words of Moses, in Deut. xxxiii. 2, as a setting forth of three revelations, the Jewish, Christian, and Mahometan. Such, however, is the Islamite interpretation:—

'The Lord came from Sinai, [Judaism.]  
 And rose up from Seir unto them, [Christianity.]  
 He shined forth from Mount Paran.' [Mahometanism.]

One more like application of Scripture remains, certainly by far the most ingenious. The seventh verse of the twenty-first chapter of Isaiah stands in the Vulgate thus: 'Et vidit currum duorum equitum, *ascensorem asini, et ascensorem cameli.*'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Möhler reminds us of Olympus among Greeks; Mount Maru, the source of the Ganges, with the Hindoos; the hills causing the cataracts of the Nile, with the ancient Egyptians; the Albordi of the Persians; and the Phrygian title of Cybele, 'the mother of mountains,' p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> In the English version the latter part runs thus:—'A chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels.' Vitringa gives a kind of *via media*; 'vecturam asinorum, vecturam camelorum.'

Herein, say these Eastern critics, is clearly signified the advent of the two great prophets; the prophet of Christianity who rode into Jerusalem upon the ass; the prophet of Islamism who was constantly mounted upon his camel. Now the many excellent persons who maintain that the Bible is always sufficient to interpret itself, will be ready to assert that *they* at least could never have been deceived by such a manifest perversion of its sense. Certainly, those who have been nurtured in the fold of Christ's Church, 'the witness and keeper of Holy Writ,' and for whom a thousand sacred influences, outward and inward, have given to the written word its illuminating power,<sup>1</sup> are not very likely to be perplexed by such a reference. The Christian student will be content, with learned commentators,<sup>2</sup> to see in this chapter of Isaiah a general picture of the advance of Cyrus against Babylon, with a possible allusion (but this is a private fancy of our own) to that conqueror's ingenious employment of the camel against the cavalry of Cræsus; admitting, of course, that the spiritual fulfilment may be in store in the ultimate conquest of the mystical Babylon by the *true* Cyrus. Nevertheless, if we had been brought up from infancy to regard this verse from a Mahometan point of view, it would probably be very difficult for us to unlearn our traditional interpretation.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the admissions even of Sir J. Stephen (no supporter of Church authority) in this respect, 'Essays in Eccl. Biography,' vol. ii. p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Vitringa in loc. *item* Cornelius à Lapide.

<sup>3</sup> These texts are given by Prideaux, *Life of Mahomet*: and one of them (Deut. xxxiii. 2) likewise by Maracci (cit. ap. Möhler.)

But to return to the contradictory enunciations of the Koran respecting Christianity. The following passage is one of those which is favourable to the 'four people of the book,' as Mahomet termed the professors of those religions which had, or claimed to have, a written revelation.

'Surely those who believe, and those who 'Judaize, and Christians and Sabians, whosoever 'believeth in God, and the last day, and doth 'that which is right, they shall have their reward 'with their Lord; there shall come no fear on 'them, neither shall they be grieved.'<sup>1</sup>

But in the very next chapter, according to the existing order, we read, 'Whoever followeth any 'other religion than ISLAM, it shall not be accepted of him, and in the next life he shall be of 'those who perish.'<sup>2</sup>

In attempting to account for this divergence, we shall chiefly follow the admirable guidance of Möhler; and even where we make remarks which are not directly traceable to his Essay, they will probably be found to have been prompted by his original and suggestive hints.

Möhler observes that one way of extracting a decisive sense from the Koran, in this respect, has been sought by a mere enumeration of passages upon either side, with the intent of adjudging the palm to the majority. Such a method he naturally rejects, as being neither very profound nor philosophical.

Another, and certainly a more plausible, solution of the difficulty is offered by the very common assertion that the favourable passages are

<sup>1</sup> Koran, chap. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. chap. iii.

those of Mahomet's earlier life, while the hostile and exclusive ones belong to his later career, and consequently abrogate the previous *dicta*. This account of the matter is very largely assumed, and, of course, coincides with the views of those who, with Gibbon, esteem Mahomet sincere at first, and an impostor afterwards. But, without re-opening this part of the question, it must be observed, that the chronological view, even though it should prove true, is by no means easy of proof. The Koran, as is well known, was not reduced into its present shape until after its author's death; and Abu Beker, its first editor, having collected the chapters, (which were in a disjointed state, on skins, and palm-leaves, and blade-bones,) placed, as a rule, the longest chapters first, and the shortest last,<sup>1</sup>—a plan admirable for its simplicity, but not conducive to a clear comprehension of Mahometan doctrine.

While other writers attribute this change on Mahomet's part to the mere inflation produced by success, and his growing ideas of consequence as a statesman and warrior, Möhler penetrates more deeply, and arrives at the conclusion, that the turning-point of the whole is to be found in the fact, that *Mahomet commenced his career merely as the prophet of Arabia, and by degrees persuaded himself that he was the destined prophet of the world.* We cannot afford space for the various arguments by which the learned and thoughtful essayist maintains and, in our judgment, establishes this position; but a brief statement of the important consequences which would

<sup>1</sup> Sale and others.

naturally result from such a change in the author of the Koran, will, we trust, be found interesting and important in itself, and at the same time confirmatory of the correctness of the theory.

It is evident that this account of the matter does not militate against the chronological view. There is good reason to believe, from a number of historical facts, that hostility to Christianity is the *later*, and therefore the true, doctrine really deducible from the Koran, though it cannot be proved from the book alone.

Sabian idolaters could not long remain on terms with one who pounded their images into dust. The Jews, though a few accepted Mahomet as no bad representative (as in truth he was not) of their carnal notion of a Messiah, yet in the main scorned the idea of submission to one who proclaimed himself to be the descendant of the bondswoman, Hagar, and who demanded at least *some* recognition of the prophetic office of Him, whom their fathers had crucified as an impostor; and thus became, as Dean Milman<sup>1</sup> truly remarks, his first opponents, and the first victims of his sanguinary teaching. The zeal of the son of Abdallah was awakened against the Jews much sooner than against the Christians; indeed, a singular passage in the fifth chapter of the Koran contrasts *Jewish* with *Christian* reception of Islamism, to the great advantage of the Christians; a circumstance accounted for by the favour shown towards some fugitive Mussulmans on the part of the Christian king of Ethiopia.<sup>2</sup> All this, however, was per-

<sup>1</sup> Hist. of Jews, vol. iii. p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> Sale's Notes to Koran, *in loc.* Cf. Caussin, tom. i. p. 388, *et seq.* This event took place in A. D. 615, seven years before the Hegira.

fectly compatible with the earlier and more restricted claims of Mahomet. The Jewish tribes had opposed him even within the confines of Arabia. But when once the conviction had settled upon his mind, that he was to be the teacher not of a nation only but of the world at large, Christianity must needs appear to him in a different light. There are, as Möhler observes, only two possible inward relations between systems in connexion with each other; the relation of co-ordination, and the relation of subordination. When Mahomet commenced his career, thinking only of Arabia and her needs, he regarded Christianity as a religion *co-ordinate* with that he preached; when, extending his sphere of thought and action, he looked upon the whole of God's earth as the object of his mission, he was obliged to regard Christianity as *subordinate* to Islamism. If Christians would not acknowledge this, they became enemies to the creeds of Islam, and must be treated accordingly: though, like the other 'people of the book,' they might be permitted, on becoming tributary, to escape that death by the sword, which was to be the fate of unbelievers, who did not even pretend to a revelation.

What temper of mind it was that produced this change in Mahomet, who, with mere mortal eyes, can pretend to judge? Of a more worldly conqueror Manzoni has magnificently sung:—

' La procellosa e trepida  
Gioja d'un gran disegno,  
L'ansia d'un cor, che indocile  
Ferve pensando al regno,  
E'l giunge, e tiene un premio  
Ch'era follia sperar,

*Tutto ei provò ; la gloria  
Maggior, dopo il periglio,  
La fuga, e la vittoria.*

But although these glowing words might be transferred to a description of some portion of the inner, as well as the outer, life of Mahomet, they would still describe a portion only. The logical connexion between Monotheism and a World-Religion, whereas idolatry had always been peculiarly local: the deepening conviction of the truth of many of his first principles (and they were in the main most true); the strange growth of spiritual ambition, a spell more potent than even the lust of wealth and temporal power, though the last may not have been wholly absent from the mind of Mahomet; the physical and mental condition of one subject to fits of epilepsy, and so affected that even Kadajah feared that he was possessed by an evil spirit; the countenance given to his mistakes respecting Christian doctrine by the perverse teaching of the sad heresies around him; the fatal manner in which any one great error may lead to more, and become a powerful instrument in the hands of Satan for the deterioration of character; all these jarring and conflicting elements, who, we repeat, of mortal men can combine and harmonize, so as to pronounce a safe and confident verdict?<sup>1</sup>

In pursuing the line of thought thus laid open, we shall find ourselves gliding almost impercepti-

<sup>1</sup> For the proof of Mahomet's liability to epileptic fits, often, though not universally, preceding his visions, see the note to the sixth chapter of Mr. Irving's *Life of Mahomet*. (Möhler (p. 379, text and note,) thinks that these attacks may be fairly compared with the bodily affections of the Montanists, and in a later day, the Jumpers.

bly from *Mahomet's* view of the relation between Islamism and the faith of the Cross, to ideas which are, we hope, more consonant to a Christian aspect of the subject.

In attempting to become a Universal instead of merely a National Prophet, Mahomet was evidently unconscious of the far larger demands, if we may so speak, which would be made upon both his creed and character.

Nearly all the national religions are inseparably bound up with the State. We see this not only in the case of the false creeds of Paganism, but likewise in that of the divine creed of Judaism, which we know to have been eminently national. Mahomet, in trying to found a universal religion, retained this idea, and therefore virtually sought to found at the same time a universal Monarchy. He was himself Priest and Prince, *the one, because the other*; the earliest Caliphs were likewise High Priests,<sup>1</sup> and if the Ottoman Sultan does not actually exercise priestly functions, yet the Mufti who does exercise them is only his representative. Hence the singular circumstance that in Turkey a *jurist* and a *divine* go by the selfsame name of *Ulema*. Hence, in theory at least, all Mussulmans should recognize one sovereign only, whose authority is unique and absolute; and the Mahometan Princes of Hindostan and the Emperors of Morocco have acknowledged their subjection to the 'Ottoman Lord.'

But this element of a national religion, how

<sup>1</sup> M. Ubicini (Lettre Sixième) denies this view of the Caliphate. But this writer, however trustworthy in statistics, is not happy upon points of criticism or history. The best authorities are all against him here.



shall it ultimately suit a creed which pretends to universality? Judaism owned such a feature, but then Judaism did not pretend to be a faith for all times and nations. No, though Mahomet failed to apprehend this, a religion which shall win the world must enjoy an independent existence of its own, capable indeed of union with any rational form of government, but equally capable, if need be, of standing in the completest isolation. If this inseparable connexion imparted to Islamism no small amount of its first unity and strength, it is not difficult to show that it likewise contains within itself the seeds of disunion and decay. To mention two points by way of illustration. Equality before God is a grand truth in religion; but it does not follow that *civil* equality is beneficial to the state. On the contrary, as Lord Bacon observes in one of his Essays, 'a monarchy where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny; for nobility attempers sovereignty.' Again, fixedness in dogmas of faith is commendable; but utter immovability in politics is ruinous. Now strict adherence to the Koran involves both these evils.

A similar judgment may likewise be passed, perhaps, upon the use of the sword as an instrument of conversion. Under the elder dispensation, the Almighty had employed that dread scourge as the chastiser of guilty nations, whom He might have punished, had it so pleased Him, with a second flood, or with the fiery doom of the cities of the plain. Mahomet knew this well: he believed, and inspired his followers with the belief, that they were as much thoroughly the divinely appointed scourges of God as ever the

Israelites had been. Now, we will not say that in conquest lay the secret of Mahometan success; herein we admit the full force of Mr. Carlyle's remark, that before you proceed to convert with the sword, you must first get your sword, and that the founder of every religion is at first in a minority of *one*. Neither do we pretend that war has had no share in the defence and propagation of the Christian faith. But most assuredly in no other creed is war a part of its very essence; no other religion ever admitted, as Islamism does, that too long continuance of peace endangered its vigour and vitality. This, again, is a feature which would of itself make the claim of Mahometanism to be a world religion of the universe utterly hopeless and untenable. It knows nothing of universal love, it cannot imagine the union of special favour to its own, with benevolence to all; it cannot comprehend the maxim, 'Let us do good unto all men, but especially unto them who are of the household of faith.'

A similar result would probably follow from an investigation of its countenance of *the principle* of slavery. Granting the many humane provisions of the Koran, and of Turkish law and custom with regard to slaves; granting, that Christian states, in both hemispheres, have been fearfully guilty at times in this respect, and have treated their slaves far worse than Turks and Arabs treat them, it still remains true that the Mediæval Church was the great instrument for the abolition of slavery in Europe, and that Christianity is at this moment the lever which will in time raise slavery to freedom in all lands. The principle of slavery can never be recognised by a faith which is to subdue to itself all kingdoms of the earth.

There remains to be noticed the great *personal* distinction between the position of a national prophet and a prophet of the universe, a distinction which Mahomet entirely failed to grasp, or even to catch a glimpse of. Heathen races have generally some *favourite* vices, respecting which the national conscience is deadened; whence follows an equally faint approbation, perhaps a positive *dis*-approbation, of some particular virtues. These, however, will vary in different climates and different ages; one nation will be shocked at sins which are unblushingly enacted by another; the heathen Germans and the heathen Romans, for example, could mutually condemn some glaring faults in each others characters and moral practice. Now all that is, humanly speaking, required for the teacher of a race is, that he be a good man, *according to the standard of that race*. His disciples will not ask from him the inculcation of virtues of which they have never dreamt, nor the repression of vicious customs and ideas, which in their minds have long ceased to appear reprehensible. Such a teacher Mahomet might not irrationally, (however mistakenly as respects a *divine* mission,) claim to prove; whatever his faults, and they were in reality deep and terrible, there is yet no reason to doubt but that he was in the main a *good Arabian*, in few respects inferior to the average standard of his countrymen, in many respects extremely far above it. But the prophet of the world must be more than this; the morality which *he* teaches must accord not with the conventional rules of his own peculiar age, or clime, or race, but with those eternal, unalterable, rules of right and wrong, wherein even God is a law unto himself; the doc-

trine which *he* imparts must satisfy all the *really* religious needs, not of this nor of that nation, but of humanity at large. He must be, in short, not merely a good Greek, a good Arab, a good member of any of the great human families, he must be emphatically *a good MAN*. A good man, nay, rather a perfect man; *a type and model of humanity*. And what son of man should there be found who could be capable of such an office? Who, since the fall of our first parent in Paradise, could suffice for such a task? Not even the holiest among fallen men, not Enoch nor Noah; not Abraham nor Moses; not David nor Elias; nor even the Holy Baptist; these were all great in their generations, endowed with Heaven-sent gifts for special times and circumstances; but for the office of prophet for all times and all nations, *ONE* alone was fit, *the one true and perfect man*, who is very and eternal God.

If true and saintly prophets could not avail for so vast a work, how far less one with no really divine mission, a man blood-stained and lust-stained, capable of treachery and fierce revenge, and withal unconscious of his shame.<sup>1</sup> And therefore, when the Arabian teacher proclaimed to all the nations round his celebrated motto, 'There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God,' he combined with a great and vital truth, a hopeless and tremendous falsehood. So long, indeed, as his followers turned eastward, and met with super-

<sup>1</sup> Neither the treacherous assassination of his Jewish enemies, nor the command to slaughter Nodar, son of Hareth, because he had satirised him, at all diminished his self-respect, nor the respect of the Arabians. Such deeds were not *crimes* in their eyes.

stitutions worse than their own, that truth held its way triumphantly,

‘ And overthrew, and scatter’d, and destroy’d,  
And trampled down ;’

with something, it may be, of a blessing in its train. But when, in course of time, the influence of that false claim worked itself to light, and Moslems turned westward, and met the banners of the Cross, then, however much the sins and divisions of Christendom may have deserved the chastisement, they became tools of Satan, and supporters of his kingdom;<sup>1</sup> and like that king of old, whose hosts subdued the nations, and cast their gods into the fire, but fell prostrate under the stroke of the destroying angel when they dared to attack the holy city, Jerusalem, even so did the warriors of Islam, triumphant against the idols of wood and stone, insure their own ultimate defeat when they lifted up their hands against the Church of Christ ; and were doomed to perish, if not by the swift and sudden destruction which overtook the army of Sennacherib, yet by an overthrow no less utter and complete in the sight of Him with whom one day is a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Denying alike the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the verity of our Saviour’s Godhead,<sup>2</sup> and the historical fact of his crucifixion,<sup>3</sup> claiming for their false prophet the place which is due to Christ alone, they must be regarded, within the pale of Christendom, as the abettors of a God-denying heresy.

We say a heresy, for there is no denying that

‘ <sup>1</sup> Cf. Dr. Newman, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Koran, chap. v. et alibi.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. chap. iv.

the amount of truth in Islamism is such as to warrant the adoption of such a term in ordinary parlance, though not perhaps in the scientific language of theology. For there is, as Möhler has acutely remarked in another of his works,<sup>1</sup> one marked and leading distinction between Mahometanism and all heretical creeds, properly so called. Heresies, however much they may distort the Catholic faith concerning the person and office of our blessed Lord, yet agree in recognising in Him the first and best of all teachers, through whom the human race has received its last and highest religious culture. But Islamism does not make this admission; though Jesus be a great prophet, Mahomet is supposed to be greater. Bearing this weighty difference in mind, we may readily admit the many points of resemblance between Moslem and heretical teaching. We have heard a distinguished missionary of our Church, who has had practical experience of Mahometanism side by side with idolatrous beliefs, not long since express himself in this way concerning it; and De Maistre<sup>2</sup> quotes Sir William Jones, Leibnitz, Nicole, and the French Protestant minister, Jurieu, to the same effect. He might have looked yet further back. In the *Divina Commedia*, the great antagonist of the Church in the West is classed, not with the heathen, but with heretics and schismatics.

‘Vedi come storpiato è Maometto :  
 Dinanzi a me sen va piangendo Ali,  
 Fesso nel volto dal mento al ciuffetto :

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<sup>1</sup> Symbolism, ad init.

<sup>2</sup> Soirées de S. Pétersbourg. Onzième Entretien.

E tutti gli altri, che tu vedi qui,  
*Seminator di scandalo e di scisma*  
*Fur vivi, e però son fessi così.*<sup>1</sup>

And there is, indeed, one point on which the comparison of Mahometanism to a heresy most certainly holds good. It is a leading characteristic of heresy, that after the denial of some one or more portions of saving truth, it imagines itself to hold the remainder in the same way as the mind of the Church, nay, very often still more clearly, simply, firmly. Whereas, in reality, the truth which heretics still maintain, inevitably loses some vital portion of its character, by its isolation from the accompanying *dogmas*, to which it stood in a fixed and definite relation; it is held less firmly and completely than by the orthodox, who kept it in its due and proper place; it is held less clearly, and presents to the really enlightened and sanctified reason even greater difficulties than those which it strives to shun. The analogy of sounds and colours might serve to teach us this—these are not the same to eye and ear, when their relation is destroyed.

‘Is not Truth *one* and indivisible?  
 Take from the Harmony a single tone—  
 A single tint take from the Iris bow.  
 And lo! what once was all, is nothing—while  
 Fails to the lovely whole one tint or tone!’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dante, *Inferno*, xxviii. 31–36.

‘Lo!

How is Mohammed mangled: before me  
 Walks Ali weeping, from the chin his face  
 Cleft to the forelock; and the others all,  
 Whom here thou seest, while they lived, did sow  
 Scandal and schism, and therefore thus are rent.’—

CARY.

<sup>2</sup> Schiller (Bulwer Lytton’s translation,) *Veiled Image* at Sais.

If it be over-bold to term the residue *nothing* in such cases, we may yet say that it has become something very different from what it was. This is not, however, generally observed with respect to erroneous creeds, least of all with respect to Mahometanism. Let us look at the matter for one moment, then, in a few particulars.

The Church teaches the unity of the Divine Majesty, and the Omnipotence of His Will. So does Islamism. But the Mahometan must bow prostrate before His Maker as a *Power*, and has nothing like mediation to soften this aspect of the Almighty. Do we assert that this truth exercises no influence over the Moslem mind? Far from it; with the better among them it causes much sedateness, pensiveness, and even melancholy.<sup>1</sup> It is, we know from revelation, the dogma, which even 'devils believe and tremble.' But viewed in connexion with a Mediator, or apart from that connexion, it becomes subjectively, in the believer's mind as well as objectively, an absolutely different doctrine. Nay, even the teaching of Mahometanism respecting the unity is not, in strictness of speech, identical with that of the Church. For

<sup>1</sup> A Spanish scholar points out to us Condé's account of Abdallah, king of Cordova (A.D. 922), and Abderrahman, his successor about 50 years later, as quite confirming this remark. (Hist. de la Dominacion de los Arabes en Espana, pp. 178, 227.) Abderrahman, a most pious Mussulman, when charged with melancholy, said, 'How can it be otherwise to man, who has the world for his house, and Eblis for his neighbour, who is perpetually writing down all his words, deeds, and thoughts.' (Condé, chap. lxxxvii. p. 227.) How differently might he have thought, could he have known of the meeting of Eblis with the Son of Man in the wilderness, and of all that hangs thereby! The pictures of the present Sultan of Turkey seem to reveal a like state of feeling.



Mahometanism teaches an unity of person, a doctrine probably harder for the reason to grasp (apart from its falsity) than that of the sublime and holy truth of the Trinity in Unity. It is at least worth while to listen to the words of Möhler upon this head. He denies that the monotheism of Islam can ever satisfy the philosophic reason. 'That the Godhead should be one person is utterly 'inconceivable, absolutely irrational, and opposed to all true speculation.'<sup>1</sup> And he adds, with a more startling boldness—yet may not this assertion be true likewise?—'that God has not become man is even a [moral] contradiction.'<sup>2</sup>

In respect of moral precepts, we own that the resemblance between Mahometanism and the Gospel is more marked. Hospitality and almsgiving (with a promise of greater blessing upon *secret* almsgiving) are strongly enjoined in the Koran, and have been duly practised by Mahomet's disciples. The resemblance of some of these commands to those of our Lord, is too great to be merely a coincidence. But even the moral precepts sometimes display ambiguity. It speaks in two opposite ways concerning revenge.<sup>3</sup> Can we marvel if Moslems should follow the example of their prophet, and be revengeful? How sublimely opposite, if we may even hint at a comparison without impiety, is the model which is set before the Christian!

<sup>1</sup> 'Dass die Gottheit eine Person sei, ist eben das ganz und gar Undenkbare, durchaus Unvernünftige, und aller wahren Speculation Entgegengesetzte.'—P. 397. Bp. Jer. Taylor employs the English word 'speculation' precisely in this sense.

<sup>2</sup> 'Das Gott nicht Mensch geworden, ist eben das Widersinnige.'—Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Koran, chap. xvi. compared with chap. xxii.

Predestination is a point on which identity of opinion between the Mahometan and *many* Christians is often supposed to exist. Such identity we cannot admit. It is true that the insuperable difficulty to finite intellects, of reconciling the truth of the Divine prescience and government with man's free agency must underlie all religions. Christianity has not escaped the troubles arising from such perplexities; all theologians know how intimately this thorny question is connected with the great name of St. Augustine; all readers of history are aware of the part played among Protestants by Calvinism, and among Roman Catholics by Jansenism. M. Ubicini goes so far as to say, that neither Mahomet nor his commentators have spoken so strongly upon predestination, as S. Augustine. But we must again warn the reader (and the more now that an English version of the book is being advertised) against following this very philo-Turkish writer, when he quits his one strong point, viz. statistics. Among Christians, even the most Augustinian in their tenets, the doctrine of election is tempered and modified by a thousand other influences. In Islamism it stands unmodified and alone. The inconsistent attempt of the Ulemas, to refer the doctrine to the spiritual life alone, fails, M. Ubicini himself admits, to influence the mass of the people; on the contrary, the idea of fatalism seems never absent from their minds. We may grant, with him, that it lends a kind of dignity to the conduct of the Moslem under reverses; that no accident extorts a murmur, that if a fire has burnt down his house, a fraud robbed him of half his fortune, he says *kismet*, (destiny), and

passes uncomplainingly from a state of opulence to one of wretchedness.<sup>1</sup> But it would not be difficult to show that this feeling is something very distinct from the resignation of a true Christian. Indeed, M. Ubicini's own expression (before cited) of 'la force d'âme du Stöicien,' as applied to the Osmanlis, at once betokens the presence of a heathen idea. We cannot afford to dwell longer on this topic; but little more perhaps is required to suggest to the thoughtful reader, that neither in theory, nor in practical results, is the Mussulman doctrine of *kismet* identical with the Christian teaching concerning Divine Providence; to say nothing of the fact, that the words, even of so great a doctor as St. Augustine on this subject, have never been regarded as constituting an article of the Church's Creed.

If we have tried to make the fullest admissions that in fairness can be made on behalf of Mahomet and his creed, and its influence upon the human race, this arises, we trust, from a love of truth, and from a conviction that Christianity can never suffer from any equitable comparison. What one good thing does Islamism contain, in which the Gospel did not anticipate its teaching? The claim of the former to universal dominion may surely by this time be considered to be virtually negatived. Not only has it failed to triumph in the extreme East, but it has proved more signally weak in the West, where it never once succeeded in converting any single one of the great European families. Regard Mahometanism intellectually: we have already named the cycle of arts and sci-

<sup>1</sup> Ubicini. Lettre Vingtième, p. 497.

ences in which the Saracens attained excellence. But even the Arabian intellect was receptive rather than originate. The researches of this century (incomplete, at present, we admit) have tended to lower the estimate of the literary wealth supposed to lie enshrined in the '*intactis Arabum thesauris*.' Mr. Colebrooke tells us that the Hindoos far excelled them in algebra. Condé<sup>1</sup> finds that numbers of their historians are but copyists from their predecessors; and even of their greatest names, a recent French writer does not hesitate to say—'La science arabe est une science d'emprunt; pour savoir ce qui appartient à chacun d'eux, il faut les juger avec Aristote, Galen, Ptolémée, Euclide à la main.' This is said *à propos* of one so famous as Avicenna, concerning whom it is observed—'Comme la plupart des savants Arabes, Avicenne est au-dessous de la réputation qu'on lui a faite.'<sup>2</sup> And yet the Arabs are, intellectually, quite the first of Mahometan nations. We allow them poetry and fiction: but these gifts are thoroughly pre-Islamite, and owe little or nothing to Mahomet. Even of the greatest of Persian poets, Firdusí, it is doubted (though he lived after the Mahometan conquest of his country) whether he was not an adherent of the ancient national faith,—still a Gheber in his heart. In many regions of art, Mahometanism has no existence. Has it any Haydn, Handel, or Mozart? Sculptors and painters it cannot have. Yet what a void is here; how mighty, though insensible, has been the influence of Christian art! What would

<sup>1</sup> Ubi supra (Prologo.)

<sup>2</sup> Nouvelle Biographie Universelle, Art. Avicenne.

Europe be without its Giotto's and Raphaels,—its Flaxmans and Thorwaldsens? Jurists, *properly speaking*, it cannot have. All legislation is shut up in the Koran. The realms of thought connected with Roman law, and all that it has done for Europe, are to the Moslem a sealed book. Commerce, so mighty an agent in the civilization of mankind, it can hardly pursue, for the entire system of modern finance involves transactions at variance with the Koran: and the merchandise of Turkey is in the hands of Armenians and Greeks.<sup>1</sup> Above all, it has no spirit of progress: its false origin is here avenging itself: there is about it (to adopt the fine suggestion of Möhler) a spiritual and intellectual poverty, which betrays the limited and finite conceptions of a merely human author; whereas Christianity, in the manner in which it becomes 'all things to all men, in its sympathy, its very co-extensiveness with all the highest forms of civilization; in its ceaseless adaptation to the changing needs of the most varied ages, climes, and races, partakes of the Divine and *infinite* spirit of its Founder, and is exuberant with 'the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.'

Mahometanism knows nothing of the might of meekness: since it once gained an army of supporters, it has never exhibited to the world the spectacle of a suffering body: it has had indeed its fervid soldiers, but *no real martyrs*. What again (a crucial text this for a religion), what has it done for women? Granting that Mahomet in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. on these points, Lectures on the Turks, pp. 242, 248. Lord Lindsay (Progression by Antagonism), Mr. Maurice Möhler, and others, question, and not without reason, how far intellectual development was ever a *bonâ fide* result of Islamism.

some degree exalted their condition among the Arabs, we need only glance at the accounts of Turkish harems, to feel convinced that Kadijah and Ayesbah, and Fatima, have not been reproduced, nor even imitated by the later daughters of the Moslem. The continuance of polygamy at all would prove fatal to its universality, perhaps even if Christianity were not at hand to confront it. It can never satisfy the needs of woman's heart.

But Islam will not perish till its work is done ; and what is that work to be ? A profound question, which meets with very contrary replies. Professor White, in a sermon appended to his 'Bampton Lectures,' spoke hopefully of the chances of converting Moslems, as distinguished from votaries of Buddhism or Brahmanism ; Mr. Forster maintains that it must eventually prepare the way for the missions of the Cross, and claims the support of Mede and Warburton for his opinion ; Möhler, who regarded the subject from a point of view the most opposite to that of Mr. Forster, yet displays in many respects a truly surprising amount of agreement with his views, and is sanguine that Mahometanism in Africa (where it has won converts by fair persuasion as well as by the sword), is doing the work which Judaism was at first divinely commissioned to effect, that of preparing the way for a purer faith in hearts as yet hard and stubborn, and incapable of its reception ; so that one day the true labourers shall find a harvest ready for their reaping, and the Gospel speed thither on its way rejoicing, and Mahomet prove the servant of Christ.

Visions these so bright and winning, so consonant to the glory of Christ's religion, so worthy of

the triumphs of Him who is ever justified in His sayings, and overcomes when He is judged, and overruleth all to good, that we almost shrink from venturing even to hint a doubt of their correctness. We wish to believe them true; we dare not call them false: but it must be, though with regret, remarked, that they do not yet seem to to have been ratified by the stern reality of facts. Rather do we fear, with Archdeacon Grant, that the system of the false Prophet 'offers the most formidable obstruction to the faith of Christ, from the fact of its being, as it is, a counterfeit of the truth itself.'<sup>1</sup> Such fear is increased by the accounts of missionaries of the extreme difficulty of converting a Mahometan. One of our own Church to whom we have already alluded, told us, that though he would rejoice in hearing of any idolaters whom the Gospel *could not* reach, turning Mahometans; yet that where the Malay (who is at present the Mussulman missionary) confronts the Christian priest, the only chance, humanly speaking, of the latter making a convert lay in his anticipating the teacher of Mahometanism. We do not wish, however, hastily to prejudge the somewhat peculiar case of Africa. Blessed indeed were it, if these sanguine expectations should prove true!

We have spoken chiefly of the Arab, or Saracen, Mahometans; whom we imagine to be the finest specimens of Mussulmans. But if there be a race who have seldom, if ever, fought against pagan idolatry, but *constantly* against the Cross; who, though truthful, dignified, and amiable in repose, are cruelty personified when once aroused to deeds

<sup>1</sup> Bampton Lectures, Lect. vii. p. 227.

of blood; who are, as a nation, at once most proud and most depraved; under whose blighting yoke the most fertile portions of God's earth lie desolate and withering,<sup>1</sup>—how, it may well be asked, should Christians feel towards such a race? They may succour them if oppressed, for the Gospel teaches us to befriend all such; they must keep all promises, not in themselves sinful,<sup>2</sup> for the good man observes his plighted word, 'though it be to his own hindrance;' they must pray earnestly, and lovingly pray, especially on the anniversary of the Crucifixion, that He, the Crucified, would have mercy upon them, that, being acknowledged by them in part, He may be acknowledged by them altogether, and may lead them, with all other misbelievers, into His flock; but really to sympathise with them is impossible. What pagan, what Mahometan race, has shed the blood of so many thousands of Christ's people?

'The Saracens even, who gave birth to an imposture, withered away at the end of 300 or 400 years, and had not the power, though they had the will, to persevere in their enmity to the Cross. The Tartars had both the will and the power, but they were far off from Christendom, or came down in ephemeral outbreaks, which were rather those of freebooters than persecutors, or were directed as often against the enemies of the Church, as against her children: but the unhappy race of whom I am speaking, from the first moment they appear in the history of Christendom, are its unmitigated, its obstinate, its consistent foes. They are inexhausti-

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<sup>1</sup> It is with extreme reluctance that we omit the inimitably beautiful passages, upon this part of the subject, contained in 'Lectures upon the History of the Turks,' (p. 138, *et seq.*) Dr. Newman may be naturally suspected of partiality where he compares Italy with Turkey, but we can safely affirm that he has, in this respect, *under-stated*, rather than *over-stated* his case.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dr. Newman's Preface.



ble in numbers, pouring down upon the south and west, and taking one and the same terrible mould of misbelief, as they successively descend. They have the populousness of the north, with the fire of the south ; the resources of Tartars, with the fanaticism of Saracens. And when their strength declines, and age steals upon them, there is no softening, no misgiving ; they die and make no sign. In the words of the Wise Man, " Being born, they forthwith ceased to be ; and " have been able to show no mark of virtue, but are consumed in wickedness." God's judgments, God's mercies, are inscrutable ; one nation is taken, another is left. It is a mystery, but the fact stands ; since the year 1048, the Turks have been the great Antichrist among the races of men.<sup>1</sup>

Not, we hope and trust, from any lack of patriotism, but in a spirit of truest love for our mother country, we may be permitted to regret that any circumstances should have rendered an armed alliance with Turkey so imperative.

The present war is essentially against Russian ambition ; it is only accidentally in behalf of the Crescent : that it may be overruled to the establishment of the Cross again in Constantinople is at least a subject of patriotic and Christian hope.

Already, indeed, that admiration for Turks, of which we spoke at the commencement of this article, is beginning to evaporate. There can be no doubt, as has been happily said, the Turk receives Christian succour—the succour of Giaours (men, that is, without souls) as he calls them in the same spirit as he might eat swine's flesh to save himself from starving. But if any of our readers shrink from accepting sketches of Turkish character at our hands, and would fain look into the subject for themselves, thus much of advice we may beg them to accept, namely, that they would

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Newman, pp. 127, 128.

be extremely cautious in trusting books of travel and the like, written *since the war has broken out*. Hardly any, not even Mr. Curzon's, are free from the evident mark of the pressure of the times. How different the tone of tourists but a short season before! Look at the graceful pages of 'Way-side Sketches; or, Seven Years' Wanderings among the Greeks and Turks.' Look at—but perhaps Mr. Thackeray is too professed a satirist for us to speak of his 'Cornhill to Cairo'—look at, then, the able pages of Mr. Bayle St. John's 'Turks in Europe.' Consider, for they are well worth considering, (as suggestive of thoughts in danger of being ignored at present) the following words from such a man as Niebuhr:—

'In those *happier times* when the Turkish empire was verging without any hindrance to its dissolution and ruin, through its own barbarism and wickedness; and when the Christians under its yoke were taking advantage of the growing sluggishness, rapacity, and shortsightedness of their tyrants to lay the foundations of freedom for their posterity, which must have been attained but that the malice of fiends has converted the noblest hopes into the agonies of despair;—in those happier times, when much that was great and excellent was surviving here and there in that unfortunate country unobserved, and thus escaped being crushed and destroyed; some bands of free-spirited men retired from various parts of Epirus to the mountains of Suli. There was formed that people whose heroism and misfortunes have left the Messenians far behind it, and the extermination of which, through the agency of the Franks, *will draw down the curses of posterity on our age*, long after all the guilty have been called before the judgment-seat of God.'

Think how thoroughly Sir A. Alison has expressed the general sentiment in 1827, when he

<sup>1</sup> Niebuhr, *Hist. of Rome*, vol. i. p. 809. (Eng. Tr.)

asserts, 'that after the massacre of Chios, the 'Turks had thrown themselves out of the pale of 'civilization, had proved themselves to be pirates, 'enemies of the human race, and no longer entitled to toleration from the European family;' when he declares that expulsion from Europe was the natural and legitimate consequence of their flagrant violation of its usages in war.<sup>1</sup>

All Europe is now condemning with the just voice of indignant reprobation the cruelties practised in the battle-field by the Russians, who are, thus far, more guilty than their Turkish opponents, in that Christianity should have taught them better things. We are not apologists for Russian barbarity in the soldier, any more than for Russian ambition in the Emperor; but our notices of Mahometanism would be *most unfair and incomplete*, if, after having allowed the most that can be said on behalf of Mahomet and his disciples in Asia and Africa, we should omit to touch upon the history of their anti-Christian deeds in Europe. A summary of a portion (and only a portion) of those deeds has been executed for us in a manner so far above anything that we can pretend to, that we cannot resist quoting it at some length :—

'I am not insensible, I wish to do justice to the high qualities of the Turkish race. I do not altogether deny to its national character the grandeur, the force and originality, the valour, the truthfulness and sense of justice, the sobriety and gentleness, which historians and travellers speak of; but in spite of all that has been done for them by nature and the world, Tartar still is the staple of their composition; and their gifts and attainments, whatever they

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<sup>1</sup> Hist. of Europe from 1816 to 1852, vol. iii. p. 234.

may be, do but make them the more efficient foes of faith and civilization.

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‘ I might allude, if I dare, but I dare not, nor does any one else dare, else allusion might be made to those unutterable deeds which brand the people which allows them, even in the natural judgment of men, as the most flagitious, the most detestable of nations. I might enlarge on the reckless and remorseless cruelty which, had they succeeded in Europe, as they succeeded in Asia, would have decimated or exterminated her children; I might have reminded you, for instance, how it is almost a canon of their imperial policy for centuries that their Sultan on mounting the throne, should destroy his nearest of kin—father, brother, or cousin, who might rival him in his sovereignty; how he is surrounded, and his subjects according to their wealth, with slaves carried off from their homes, men and boys, living monuments of his barbarity towards the work of God’s hands; how he has at his remorseless will, and in the sudden breath of his mouth, the life or death of all his subjects; how he multiplies his despotism by giving to his lieutenants in every province a like prerogative; how little scruple those governors have ever felt in exercising this prerogative to the full, in executions on a large scale, and sudden overwhelming massacres; shedding blood like water, and playing with the life of man as if it were the life of a mere beast or reptile. I might call your attention to particular instances of such atrocities, such as that outrage perpetrated within the memory of many of us, how on the insurrection of the Greeks at Scio, their barbarian masters carried fire and sword throughout the flourishing island, till it was left a desert, hurrying away women and boys to an infamous captivity, and murdering youths and grown men, till, out of 120,000 souls in the spring time, not 900 were left them when the crops were ripe for the sickle.’<sup>1</sup>

The same writer reminds us of certain facts which some persons among us seem bent upon forgetting or explaining away:—

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<sup>1</sup> Lectures on Hist. of Turks, pp. 135, 136.

‘ \* \* \* How, when the Ottomans added an infantry—I mean the Janissaries—to their Tartar horse, they formed that body of troops, from first to last, for near 500 years, of boys, all born Christians, a body of at first 12,000, at last, 40,000 strong, torn away, year by year, from their parents, circumcised, trained, corrupted to the faith and morals of their masters, and becoming, in their turn, the instruments of the terrible policy of which they had themselves been the victims; and how when at length, lately, they abolished this work of their hands, they ended it by the slaughter of 20,000 of the poor renegades whom they had seduced from their God. I might remind you how, within the last few years, a Protestant traveller tells us that he found the Nestorian Christians, who had survived the massacre of their race, living in holes and pits, their pastures and tillage land forfeited, their sheep and cattle driven away, their villages burned, their ministers and people tortured: and how a Catholic missionary has found in the neighbourhood of Broussa the remnant of some twenty Catholic families, who, in consequence of repudiating the Turkish faith, had been carried all the way from Servia and Albania across the sea to Asia Minor; the men killed, the women disgraced, the boys sold, till out of 180 persons but 87 were left, and they sick, and famished, and dying amongst their unburied dead.’<sup>1</sup>

We have ventured to warn the reader against lending too implicit credence to the minor publications of the day. One exception, however, must be made on behalf of a traveller who, if not among our profoundest thinkers, is at least an independent one, and never writes otherwise than as a scholar, a gentleman, and a Christian. The ‘Diary in Turkish and Greek Waters’ is being so extensively read, and quoted in newspapers, that it is enough for us to mention it. To Lord Carlisle, then, we refer the reader for hints concerning the shocking state of morals in Turkey,

<sup>1</sup> Lectures on Hist. of Turks, pp. 137, 138.

‘such as, if fully known, would tend much to arrest the somewhat profuse flow of English sympathy for the Ottoman race;’ the thorough corruption of officials, the incredible ignorance of the mass of the people, the incurable indolence, ‘the deserted villages, uncultivated plains, banditti-haunted mountains, torpid laws, and disappearing people.’

Surely, not all the heroism of France and England can *ultimately* save a race like this. The ambition of Russia, the guile of Greece, may have prolonged their term of European existence, but can it be more than a prolongation? They may be saved from external enemies, but can they be saved from themselves? The Sultan (even a Turk, Lord Carlisle tells us, has suggested the possibility of such an event)—the Sultan might become a Christian. But what, we must ask, in this case, would his Asiatic subjects say? what all those other Mahometan tribes, who, being Sunnites, recognise in him the spiritual successor of Mahomet? And yet, without such a conversion (which we regard for the moment in a temporal and political point of view, apart from its higher import), how can the Turks in Europe become civilized, and how, if uncivilized, can they hope to retain their position? They, and they perhaps alone, among the proselytes of Mahometanism, have been constantly and solely the enemies, not of paganism, but of Christianity; they have brought out, not the better, but the worst features of the creed of Islam; they, for the last 800 years, have been troubling, and, whenever they dared, persecuting the Church of Christ; and they are reaping at length their sad and bitter reward.

In their fatalistic book—in the Koran, they find it written: 'Each nation has its allotted period: when that period has arrived, men can neither hasten nor retard it.' That text of their self-styled prophet they may well be called upon to ponder now. But the Christian knows of righteous laws which, even upon earth, bring woe upon rebellious races; he knows of chastisements denounced upon unrelenting foes of the Lamb's Bride; he opens the Book of God's truly inspired Prophet, and reads: 'The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, *those nations shall be utterly wasted.*'















